

Abstract

To say that in the USSR a strict ban was imposed on the discussion of this topic is to say nothing. To say that ridiculous excuses were invented for this crime after the fact is to tell a deliberate lie. There were no excuses. Nobody tried to justify anything. The people and the party, fathers and children, "tops" and "bottoms" were united in categorically denying the existence of the very subject for discussion, even more so - condemnation. There were no questions - but there was an answer: indestructible, multi-ton, for centuries. In granite and marble, a Soviet soldier-liberator stood above Treptow Park in Berlin with a rescued German girl in his arms, and every spring fresh flowers obediently lay down at the foot of the monument. And even after rare and scattered reminiscences began to be published in the early years of "glasnost" that a German girl could end up in the hands of a Soviet soldier in a different situation and with different consequences for the girl, no one wanted to hear these voices. In other words, I couldn't hear. Such a truth did not fit into the consciousness of a normal Soviet person ...

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Mark Solonin

VICTORY SPRING. THE FORGOTTEN CRIME OF STALIN

"Patriotism is defined as the measure of shame a person feels for crimes committed on behalf of his people"

Adam Michnik

To say that in the USSR a strict ban was imposed on the discussion of this topic is to say nothing. To say that ridiculous excuses were invented for this crime after the fact is to tell a deliberate lie. There were no excuses. Nobody tried to justify anything. The people and the party, fathers and children, "tops" and "bottoms" were united in categorically denying the existence of the very subject for discussion, even more so - condemnation. There were no questions - but there was an answer: indestructible, multi-ton, for centuries. In granite and marble, a Soviet soldier-liberator stood above Treptow Park in Berlin with a rescued German girl in his arms, and every spring fresh flowers obediently lay down at the foot of the monument.

And even after rare and scattered reminiscences began to be published in the early years of glasnost that a German girl could end up in the hands of a Soviet soldier in a different situation and with different consequences for the girl, no one wanted to hear these voices. In other words, I couldn't hear. Such a truth did not fit into the consciousness of a normal Soviet person.

Help, oddly enough, came from the West. Foreign countries once again helped us. They have already developed a whole "scientific tradition" there, in which the topic of violence against the civilian population of Germany (i.e. mass atrocities, torture,

looting, destruction of dwellings) was playfully labeled "sexual violence". And that allowed me to breathe a sigh of relief. No, no one argues with the fact that rape - both according to the laws, and even according to thieves' "concepts" - is a serious crime. But this is a special kind of crime. The accused always has the opportunity - with an impudent smirk (or frightened shifting eyes, depending on the circumstances) - to say: "Come on, you ... What violence ... Yes, she herself came ... "

So the word has been found. Further - easier. Then it remained to reduce the most difficult historical and moral problem to the topic of the notorious "sexual violence", and then question both the mass nature of the phenomenon and the very fact of violence. Of the many examples of such "offensive counter-propaganda" I will cite only one, but it is very characteristic and remarkable. This publication is noteworthy both in terms of where it appeared (the oldest and one of the most widely circulated newspapers in the country) and the high formal status of the persons involved in the discussion.

The reason for the "discussion" was the publication in Russia of the well-known book by the English historian E. Beevor "The Fall of Berlin". On July 21, 2005, Trud journalist S. Turchenko decided to deal with the uninvited "foreign consultant". Understand all the meanings that this word has in Russian. A decisive rebuff began from the very first words. From the very title of the article: **"Violence on the facts."** Further, in the subtitle, a very clear hint was given to whose echo Beevor was, and to whose mill the unnamed renegades poured water on him: "Why is the **British historian and some media retelling Goebbels' fables?**" Finally, a completely infernal picture arose in the creative imagination of the journalist: **"Goebbels is rubbing his hands in his coffin..."**

The first to speak was M.A. Gareev himself (General of the Army, President of the Academy of Military Sciences, Academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, Professor, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Doctor of Military Sciences, former Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet

army), etc. The venerable scientist had no doubts and questions:

Beevor and his sing-alongs are commonplace plagiarists. The real author of the myth about the "aggressive sexuality" of our soldiers is Goebbels. However, Beevor surpassed Goebbels... Another libel on the Soviet soldier-liberator... Personally, I participated in the liberation of East Prussia. I speak as if in spirit: I didn't even hear about sexual violence

at that time. I remember that before the formation we were read the decision of the military tribunal. The essence of the matter was that several soldiers broke into the yard of a wealthy bauer, caught several chickens, geese, and began to cook. When the battle for the farm ended, the owners got out of the basement where they were hiding and raised a cry. The noise came from a patrol. The soldier was detained. The commander of the 184th division, Major General Basan Gorodovikov, ordered a show trial of a military tribunal. The fighters were

It is not difficult to assume that the punishment would be immeasurably more severe if one of them coveted, say, the hostess.

The next army general, Hero of the Soviet Union, Hero of Socialist Labor I. Tretyak was not so categorical. He is even ready to admit that not only geese and ducks became victims of violence. But: ***"Of course, in such***

a huge military grouping that entered Germany in 1945, anything happened. The men had not seen women for several years. Someone didn't resist. But today, many recognize that sexual relations between our fighters and German women were by no means always of a violent nature. There was also mutual interest. It is strange today to read how a certain Englishman suddenly became preoccupied with sexual conflicts 60 years ago, which the Germans themselves do not remember aloud ... "

The President of the Association of Historians of the Second World War, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor O. Rzheshesky also does not hide his indignation at another attempt to ***"recreate the image of the "Asian hordes", which Nazi propaganda drove into the heads of the Germans, and then a small group of neo-fascist historians, from***

who have long been turned away in Germany (emphasis added by me - M.S.)". As expected, the professor, President of the Association of Historians, is particularly indignant at the groundlessness of the accusations:

"It would be necessary to have good reasons, to have documents, if we were to put forward such a heavy accusation against the army, which bore the brunt of the fight against the fascist invasion on its shoulders. But they are not in Beevor's book. Information about "mass violence" is based on evidence such as "Berliners remember ...", "one doctor calculated ...", which is not acceptable for the scientific study that the book claims to be.

The truth, according to Professor Rzhesheshevsky, is that ***"an avalanche of revenge could have overwhelmed Germany, but this did not happen. The servicemen of both the Soviet and other allied armies as a whole showed a humane attitude towards civilian German residents ... The headquarters took emergency measures to prevent atrocities in relation to the civilian German population.*** After this statement, Rzhesheshevsky, as befits a professional historian, cites a documented fact. A very interesting (but, unfortunately, indistinctly stated) fact:

"In the first months of 1945, 4,148 officers and a large number of privates were convicted by military tribunals for committing atrocities against the local population."

"And a large number of privates." Big is how much? No answer. You have to make assumptions. There are at least 10 soldiers per officer in the active army. If we accept on faith the thesis that the reason for the "outrages" was that ***"the men had not seen women for several years"***, then the average expected probability of committing "outrages" among the rank and file should be higher than among the officers. The officers of the Red Army (especially in the last years of the war) saw women. Comrade Stalin took care of this. In the spring of 1942 alone, more than 450,000 women were drafted as part of "mass voluntary mobilization" (that's what it was called in the GKO Decree). With particular pride, Soviet historians reported that 70% of them were sent to the

army. Along with those mobilized under the Decrees of the State Defense Committee, there were civilian women in the Active Army, the number of which in 1945 amounted to 234 thousand people.

In parentheses, we note that in 1943-1945. in the rear units and institutions of the Armed Forces of the USSR there were about 5 million men called up for military service, so sending hundreds of thousands of women to the front, to the most advanced front line, could in no way be explained by a catastrophic shortage of personnel ...

Returning to the fact cited by Professor Rzheshhevsky, we can, at a first approximation, assume that there were 10 times more privates convicted of **"outrages against the local population"** than officers. In this case, the total number of convicts (not the total number of outrageous people, but just the number of convicts!) will be 40-50 thousand people. For the spring of 45, this is **the size of one combined arms army**.

But that's not all. Continuing to demonstrate his "zeal beyond reason", S. Turchenko hurries to supplement the message of Professor Rzheshhevsky with a quote from the following

document: **"Report of the head of the political department of the 8th Guard Army of the Guard Major General M. Skosyrev dated 04/25/45:**

In recent days, the number of cases of hoarding, rape of women and other immoral phenomena on the part of military personnel has sharply decreased. 2-3 cases are registered in each settlement, while earlier the number of cases of immoral phenomena was much higher ... "

So, what did respected, authoritative people tell us? Nobody said the word "murder". M.A. Gareev knows about stolen chickens, but he has never even heard of rape; General of the Army I. Tretyak admits the presence of certain "sexual collisions" that, however, do not deserve mention and discussion; historian Rzheshhevsky does not know any documents that could confirm the fact of "mass violence", but recognizes the fact of condemnation

many thousands of soldiers and officers of the Red Army for atrocities, which, according to Gareev, did not exist at all. Major

General of the Guards proudly reports that the number of rapes and other immoral phenomena invented by Goebbels' propaganda "has sharply decreased", and "in each locality" only 2-3 cases are recorded. Sheer nonsense. ***"Before, the number of cases of immoral phenomena was much higher."***

Now let's turn to the documents and facts collected by ***"a small group of neo-fascist historians who have long been turned away in Germany."*** I must immediately admit that in this case, Professor Rzheshevsky was not very mistaken in the wording. In post-war (and what is quite strange - in post-Soviet) Germany, anti-fascist historians, who do not agree that the very fact of a violent military clash between brown and red fascism can serve as an excuse for any of these criminal dictatorships, remain in the position of "lepers", with which those who apply for a political career and state "grants" are wary of dealing. Nevertheless, in the course of many years of hard work of researchers, a huge array of documentary materials was collected and summarized, systematized in a number of collections, in particular, in the eleven-volume "Documentation of the Expulsion of the Germans" (published in 1956 - 1967)

One of the most prominent representatives of this "small group of historians" was (he died in 2002) I. Hoffmann (Hoffmann). For 35 years (from 1960 to 1995) Hoffmann worked at the Research Center for Military History of the Bundeswehr, rising through the ranks from a young specialist to scientific director of the Center. In 1995, I. Hoffmann's book "Stalin's War of Annihilation" was published. ("Stalins Vernichtungskrieg 1941-1945"), reprinted four times before the end of the century.

The reaction of the "left circles" of Germany to Hoffmann's research reached such intensity that on February 28, 1996, the deputies of a number of Bundestag factions sent "six inquiries and 14 additional questions" to the German government (whose competence, by the way, does not include the management of scientific and historical discussion). Commenting on this deplorable attempt to turn the parliament of a democratic country into a kind of inquisitorial tribunal, Hoffmann writes in the preface to the fourth edition of his book:

"If a researcher is sometimes forced to argue, as if appealing to a wall, then this is due to reasons that are deeply rooted in German post-war psychology and therefore can hardly have a rational explanation ... Many Germans, in their self-absorption, simply did not notice that they demanded from the Russians that they, Russians, continued to live quietly with Stalin's propaganda lies, if only the Germans had an alibi in the face of Hitler. They needed to present themselves to the whole world in the proper light, and at the expense of the Russians, and demonstrate how great the distance between them and Hitler has become today ..."

Further, extensive excerpts from those chapters of the book will be given (I. Hoffman, "Stalin's War of Annihilation", M., AST-Astrel, 2006, pp. 305-347), in which the events of the winter-spring of 1945 are considered. Each the episode and each quote in the book are accompanied by a reference to the relevant funds of the Federal Military Archive in Freiburg, but, given the practical inaccessibility of this archive for the average Russian reader, I did not reproduce these footnotes. The surnames of Soviet servicemen in most cases will be replaced by the first letter. So:

"The number of civilian casualties is at least a rough idea of the studies of the Federal Ministry for the Exiles and the Federal Archives, based on population statistics, although these estimates are at the lower limit and cover only victims of direct crimes.

According to them, 120,000 men, women and children were killed, mostly by Soviet soldiers, and another 100,000 - 200,000

died in prisons and camps. The proportion of those who committed suicide out of despair was also extremely high. At the same time, the gigantic human losses that took place as a result of the direct use of violence or in prisons, concentration camps and death camps in Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia (since May 1945, 270 thousand unarmed Germans were killed in Czechoslovakia, partly brutally), will remain in In this context, out of attention in the same way, at least 43,000 civilians who died of starvation and epidemics in Soviet concentration camps (special camps, special camps of the NKVD of the USSR) ...

According to a cumulative estimate, there were a total of 2.2 million "unsolved cases" in the so-called "areas of exile", where, in the further interpretation of this concept, the majority should refer to the victims of crime, i.e. about the victims of the anti-German genocide...

... What hatred propaganda did among the Red Army soldiers was truly reflected in the captured front-line letters, some of which we will cite here. They were written by servicemen of motorized units (field mail number 20739) in the period of January-February 1945.

"Every day we move further along East Prussia," S. wrote, for example, to his parents in Smolensk, " and we take revenge on the Germans for all their meanness that they have done to us ... We are now allowed to do everything with the German scoundrels."
"The Germans are all running away, they are afraid of our revenge," says the letter that L. wrote on January 30, 1945, ***" but not everyone manages to slip away. Let the German mother curse the day she gave birth to her son. Let German women now feel the horrors of war. Let them now themselves survive what they intended for other peoples."***

"The civilian population is no longer fleeing," K. wrote on January 30, 1945, to the Vladimir region. " What's going on here is just creepy." "Now we are waging war in the truest sense of the word," P. wrote on February 1, 1945 to his parents in Alma Ata, ***" we are smashing reptiles in their lair in East Prussia ... Now our***

soldiers can see how their shelters are burning, how their families wander and drag their snake offspring with them ... They probably hope to stay alive, but they have no mercy.

“There are enough German women,” E. wrote on February 3, 1945, “ they don’t need to be persuaded, you just put on the revolver and command“ Lie down! ”, Do the job and move on.” In a letter from Captain K. dated the same day, it is written: ***“We are here smoking out the Prussians so that feathers fly. Our guys have already "tasted" all the German women. In general, there are many trophies ... ”***

... Even Yu. U., the officer already mentioned above, himself a dreamy, almost philosophically minded person, full of humanistic ideals, who had long been tired of the war and complained about the victims and destruction, nevertheless did not remain untouched by the propaganda of hatred. ***“We really hate Germany and the Germans,”*** he writes in his diary on January 27, 1945 in Starkenberg, ***“ in one house, for example, our guys saw a murdered woman with 2 children. And on the street you often see murdered civilians... Of course, it is incredibly cruel to kill children... But the Germans deserved these atrocities...”***

... Incited by Soviet military propaganda and the command structures of the Red Army, the soldiers of the 16th Guards Rifle Division of the 2nd Guards Tank Corps of the 11th Guards Army in the last decade of October 1944 began to massacre the peasant population in the ledge south of Gumbinnen. In this place, the Germans, having recaptured it, were able, as an exception, to conduct more detailed investigations.

In Nemmersdorf alone, at least 72 men, women and children were killed. Women and even girls were raped before that, several women were nailed to the barn gate. Not far from there, a large number of Germans and French prisoners of war, who were still in German captivity, fell at the hands of Soviet assassins. Everywhere in the surrounding settlements, the bodies of brutally murdered residents were found - for example, in Banfeld, the Teichhof estate, Alt Wusterwitz (there, the remains of several burned alive were also found in the barn) and in other

dry places. ***"The corpses of civilians lay in masses by the road and in the courtyards of houses ... - said Ober-Lieutenant Amberger, - in particular, I saw many women who ... were raped and then killed with shots in the back of the head, and partially killed children also lay nearby ".***

About what he saw in Shillmeishen near Heidekrug in the Memel region, where on October 26, 1944 units of the 93rd Rifle Corps of the 43rd Army of the 1st Baltic Front entered, gunner Erich Cherkus from the 121st Artillery Regiment reported the following during his military judicial interrogation: ***"Near***

the shed, I found my father, lying face to the ground with a bullet hole in the back of his head... In one room, a man and a woman were lying, their hands tied behind their backs and both tied to each other with one cord... In another estate, we saw 5 children with tongues nailed to a large table. Despite intense searches, I did not find a trace of my

mother ... On the way, we saw 5 girls tied with one cord, their clothes were almost completely removed, their backs were severely torn. It looked like the girls had been dragged quite far along the ground. In addition, we saw several completely crushed carts by the road.

It is impossible to display all the terrible details or, even more so, to present a complete picture of what happened. Let a number of selected examples give an idea of the actions of the Red Army in the eastern provinces after the resumption of the offensive in January 1945. The Federal Archives, in its report "On expulsion and crimes during exile" dated May 28, 1974, published accurate data from the so-called "final sheets" about atrocities in two selected districts, namely in the East Prussian border district of Johannesburg and in the Silesian border district of Oppeln [now Opole, Poland].

According to these official investigations, in the district of Johannesburg, in the section of the 50th Army of the 2nd Belorussian Front, along with countless other murders, there was a murder on January 24, 1945 of 120 (according to other sources - 97) civilians, and

also several German soldiers and French prisoners of war from the column of refugees along the Nickelsberg - Herzogdorf road south of Arys [now Orzysz, Poland]. On the Stollendorf-Arys road, 32 refugees were shot, and on the Arys-Driegelsdorf road near Shlagakrug on February 1, on the orders of a Soviet officer, about 50 people, mostly children and youth, were torn from their parents and relatives in refugee wagons.

Near Gross Rosen, at the end of January 1945, about 30 people were burned alive in a field shed. One witness saw how **"one corpse after another" lay near the road to Arys**. In Arys itself, **"a large number of executions"** were carried out, apparently at the assembly point, and in the torture cellar of the NKVD - **"tortures of the most cruel kind"** up to death.

In the Silesian district of Oppeln, servicemen of the 32nd and 34th Guards Rifle Corps of the 5th Guards Army of the 1st Ukrainian Front by the end of January 1945 killed at least 1264 German civilians ... In Gottesdorf, on January 23, 1945, Soviet soldiers shot about 270 inhabitants, including small children and 20-40 members of the Marian Brotherhood. In Karlsruhe, 110 residents were shot, including residents of the Anninsky orphanage, in Kuppe - 60-70 residents, among them also residents of a nursing home and a priest who wanted to protect women from rape. But Johannesburg and Oppeln were only two of the many districts in the eastern provinces of the German Reich occupied by the Red Army in 1945.

On the basis of reports from the field command services, the department of the "foreign armies of the East" of the General Staff of the Ground Forces compiled several lists **"On violations of international law and atrocities committed by the Red Army in the occupied German territories"**, which, although they also do not give a general picture, but on the fresh traces of events document many Soviet atrocities with a certain degree of reliability.

Thus, on January 20, 1945, Army Group A reported that all the inhabitants of the newly occupied settlements of Reichtal [Rychtal] and Glaushe near Namslau [now Namysłów, Poland] were shot dead by Soviet soldiers of the the 9th Mechanized Corps of the 3rd Guards Tank army. On January 22, 1945, according to a report from the Army Group Center, near Grünhain in the Welau district [now Znamensk], the tanks of the 2nd Guards Tank Corps "overtook, fired with tank shells and machine-gun bursts at a column of refugees 4 km long , ***mostly women and children, and the rest were laid down by submachine gunners.***

A similar thing happened on the same day not far from there, near Gertlauken, where 50 people from the refugee column were killed by Soviet soldiers, partially by shots in the back of the head.

In West Prussia, in an unspecified locality, at the end of January, a long convoy of refugees was also overtaken by advanced Soviet tank detachments. According to several female survivors, ***"soldiers threw wagons into ditches on the side of the road and attacked women; children who rushed to their aid were shot. A Soviet colonel present at the same time regulated the queue of rapists, while another officer shot hysterical children and old people."***

Tankers of the 5th Guards Tank Army doused the horses and wagons with gasoline and set them on fire: ***"Part of the civilians, mostly women and children, jumped off the wagons and tried to escape, and some already looked like living torches. After that, the Bolsheviks opened fire. Only a few managed to escape."*** In the same way, in the Plonene region, at the end of January, the tanks of the 5th Guards Tank Army attacked and shot down a refugee column. ***"The corpses of women, old people, children, lying among mountains of rags and overturned wagons, littered the sides of the road to the very horizon."***

All women from 13 to 60 years old from this settlement, located near Elbing [now Elbląg, Poland], were continuously raped by the Red Army in the most cruel way.

German soldiers from a tank reconnaissance found one woman with the lower part of her stomach torn open with a bayonet, and another young woman on wooden plank beds with a crushed face. Destroyed and plundered carts of refugees on both sides of the road, the corpses of passengers lying nearby in a roadside ditch, were also found in Maislatine near Elbing.

The deliberate destruction by caterpillars or shelling of refugee convoys, which stretched along the roads everywhere and are well recognized as such, was reported everywhere from the eastern provinces, for example, from the area of operations of the Soviet 2nd Guards Tank Army. In the district of Waldrode on January 18 and 19, 1945, in several places, such columns were stopped, attacked and partially destroyed; **"falling women and children were shot or crushed"** or, as another account says, **"most of the women and children were killed."** Soviet tanks fired at the German hospital transport from guns and machine guns near Waldrode, as a result of which **"out of 1,000 wounded, only 80 were saved."** In addition, there are reports of Soviet tank attacks on refugee columns from Schauerkirch, Gombin, where **"about 800 women and children were killed" ...**

In the forest gatehouse near Zoldin, Soviet soldiers of the 2nd Guards Tank Army killed the forester's family and all the refugees who were there, and not far from there, German soldiers who had taken refuge in a barn were burned alive. Only in 1995 near Zoldin (now Myslibuz, Poland) was a mass grave with the remains of 120 civilians discovered.

Of the atrocities that continued to be recorded in East Prussia, only a few can also be cited. So, the Red Army soldiers of the 3rd Guards Cavalry Corps near the small village of Tollnikken were shot: a family of 7 people, including small children, because the parents opposed the rape of their two daughters, as well as a young man, a peasant and three German soldiers.

More detailed investigations, as near Gumbinnen, Goldap, Elbing and in some other places, could be carried out only in the event of a new occupation of the lost territory by German troops, which happened quite rarely: for example, in those captured on January 28-30, 1945 by units of the 10th Panzer corps of the 5th Guards Tank Army in the settlements around Preussisch Holland [now Paslenk, Poland]. The report of the Army Group North of February 2, 1945 says, for example, that in Göttchendorf, Döbern, Bordenen, the inhabitants were killed or shot. ***“In Göttchendorf near Preussisch Holland,” the report says, “only in one room are 7 dead civilians, among them 2 elderly women, 2 men, a boy of about 14 years old. Crouching in the corner is a 9-year-old boy with a completely broken skull, and above him is a 15-year-old girl with punctured hands and scratched face, chest and stomach cut with a bayonet, the lower part of the body is completely naked. An 80-year-old man lay shot dead in front of the door.”***

When German troops managed to liberate the Pomeranian town of Preussisch Friedland [now Debzchno, Poland] and the surrounding settlements at the end of January, judicial and medical officers of the German 32nd Infantry Division interrogated the survivors. The report of the command of the 2nd Army on February 14, 1945 states: ***“In Preussisch Friedland and in the village of Ziskau, on January 29 and 30, most of the men who were there were shot after the most painful torture. Houses and apartments were looted, destroyed and set on fire. At the women and children who wanted to flee, the Bolshevik killers fired from rifles and machine guns.*** In a manor located two kilometers from the highway, the corpses of children, the elderly, raped and shot women were found in all rooms.

In Preussisch Friedland and neighboring communities, investigations uncovered other atrocities as well. In Linda on January 29, 1945, 16 residents were killed, at least 50 women were raped, at least 4 women were killed after being raped. In particular, an 18-year-old girl, who was shot dead in her blood, was also raped. In three rooms of one large house, five

dead women and three dead girls, all of the victims had empty wine bottles between their legs.

In Ziskau , civilians were also shot ***“after the most painful torture”*** , as well as hiding soldiers, including a member of the Navy, and women were raped, some of them repeatedly, among them ***“an 86-year-old old woman and an 18-year-old girl from Bromberg [now Bydgoszcz, Poland], who died in terrible agony.” “In Ziskau,”*** the conclusion of the report of the command of the 2nd Army says, ***“ the officer’s wife was nailed to the floor. After that, the Bolsheviks defiled her to death.”***

The available official material is, of course, incomplete and, moreover, can only be given in this context in a wide selection, briefly and fragmentarily. But since the corresponding reports are available from the entire territory of the provinces of Silesia, Brandenburg, Pomerania and East Prussia and everywhere have the same element of crime as their content: murder, rape, robbery, looting and arson, then on the whole they nevertheless create a true picture of terrible events...

... Near the border of the Reich, west of Velun, Soviet soldiers of the 1st Ukrainian Front doused the wagons of the refugees with gasoline and burned them along with the passengers. Countless bodies of German men, women and children lay on the roads, partly in a mutilated state - with their throats cut, their tongues cut off, their stomachs ripped open. Also west of Wieluni, 25 employees of the Organization Todt were shot by tank crews of the 3rd Guards Tank Army. All men were shot in Heinersdorf, women were raped, and near Kunzendorf 25-30 Volkssturm men were shot in the back of the head.

In Beatengof near Olau [now Olawa, Poland], after re-occupying it, all the men were found dead with shots to the back of the head. The perpetrators were servicemen of the 5th Guards Army. In Grünberg [now Zielona Gora, Poland], 8 families were killed by soldiers of the 9th Guards Tank Corps. Arena

terrible crimes was the estate of Tannenfeld near Grottkau [now Grodkow, Poland]. There, the Red Army soldiers from the 229th Infantry Division raped two girls, and then killed them, abused them. One man had his eyes gouged out and his tongue cut out. The same thing happened to a 43-year-old Polish woman who was then tortured to death.

In Alt-Grottkau, servicemen of the same division killed 14 prisoners of war, cut off their heads, gouged out their eyes and crushed them with tanks. The Red Army soldiers of the same rifle division were also responsible for the atrocities in the Schwarzengrund near Grottkau. They raped women, including monastic sisters, shot the peasant Kalert, cut open his wife's stomach, cut off her hands, shot the peasant Christoph and his son, and also a young girl. At the Eisdorf estate near Merzdorf, Soviet soldiers from the 5th Guards Army gouged out the eyes of an elderly man and an elderly woman, apparently a married couple, and cut off their noses and fingers. Nearby, 11 wounded Luftwaffe soldiers were found brutally murdered.

Similarly, in Guthersdorf near Glogau [now Glogow, Poland], 21 German prisoners of war were found killed by Red Army soldiers from the 4th Panzer Army. In the village of Heslich near Striegau [now Strzegom, Poland], Maria Heinke found her husband, still showing signs of life, dying in a Soviet guardhouse. A medical examination revealed that his eyes had been gouged out, his tongue had been cut off, his arm had been broken several times and his skull had been crushed.

Soldiers of the 7th Guards Tank Corps in Ossig near Striegau raped women, killed 6-7 girls, shot 12 peasants and committed similar grave crimes in Hertwisswaldau near Jauer [now Jawor, Poland]. In Liegnitz [now Legnica, Poland], the bodies of numerous civilians were found shot by Soviet soldiers from the 6th Army. In the town of Kostenblut near Neumarkt [now Sroda-Slanska, Poland], captured by units of the 7th Guards Tank Corps, women and girls were raped, including one who was on demolition

mother of 8 children. Her brother, who tried to intercede for her, was shot dead. All foreign prisoners of war were shot, as well as 6 men and 3 women ...

Not far behind Skampe, on the road to Renchen [now Zbonszyn, Poland], the corpses of a man and a woman were found. The woman's stomach was torn open, the fetus was torn out, and the hole in the stomach was filled with sewage and straw. Nearby were the bodies of three hanged men from the Volkssturm. In Kai near Züllichau, servicemen of the 33rd Army shot the wounded, as well as women and children from one convoy, with shots in the back of the head. The city of Neu-Benchen [now Zbonszyk, Poland] was plundered by the Red Army and then deliberately set on fire. At the Schwiebus [now Swiebodzin, Poland] - Frankfurt road, the Red Army soldiers from the 69th Army shot down civilians, including women and children, so that **"the corpses lay on top of each other."** In Reppen, all the men from the passing convoy of refugees were shot by Soviet soldiers from the 19th Army, and the women were raped

On February 9, 1945, with the support of the Germans, the strike group of the Vlasov army, led by Colonel ROA Sakharov, again occupied the settlements of Neulevin and Kerstenbruch located in the bend of the Oder. According to a German report dated March 15, 1945, the population of both points **"was subjected to the most terrible abuses."** In Neulevin, a burgomaster was found shot dead, as well as a Wehrmacht soldier who was on vacation. In one shed lay the corpses of three desecrated and murdered women, two of whom had their legs tied. One German woman lay shot dead at the door of her house. An elderly couple was strangled. In Neubarnim, 19 inhabitants were found dead. The body of the innkeeper was mutilated, her legs tied with wire. Here, as in other settlements, women and girls were desecrated, and in Kerstenbruch even a 71-year-old old woman with amputated legs was desecrated. The picture of the violent crimes of the Soviet troops in these villages of the Oder bend, as elsewhere, is supplemented by robberies and deliberate destruction ...

... Only relatively few reports were received from Pomerania in February 1945, since the battles for a breakthrough here really began only at the end of the month ... In Edersdorf, servicemen of the 2nd Guards Tank Army shot 10 evacuated women and a 15-year-old boy, finished off another living victims with bayonets and pistol shots ... In Gross-Zilber near Kallis, Red Army soldiers from the 7th Guards Cavalry Corps raped a young woman with a broom stick, cut off her left breast and crushed her skull ...

The commander of the German engineering tank battalion of the 7th Panzer Division announced the terrible event. At the end of February 1945, Soviet officers from the 1st (or 160th) rifle division north of Konitz drove children aged 10-12 years old for reconnaissance into a minefield. German soldiers heard the plaintive cries of children, seriously wounded by exploding mines, ***"weakly bleeding from torn bodies."***

In East Prussia, for which fierce battles were fought, in February 1945, atrocities continued with unrelenting force, despite orders of the opposite nature ... Thus, in Landsberg, Soviet soldiers from the 331st Rifle Division herded the stunned population, including women and children, into basements, set fire to houses and began to shoot at people running in panic. Many were burned alive. In a village near the Landsberg-Heilsberg road, soldiers of the same rifle division kept women and girls locked up in the basement for 6 days and nights, some of whom were chained, and raped many times daily with the participation of officers. Due to desperate screams, two of these Soviet officers cut out the tongues of two women ***with a "semicircular knife" in front of everyone.*** German tank soldiers managed to free only a few of the unfortunate, 20 women died from abuse.

In Hanshagen near Preisch-Eylau [now Bagrationovsk], Red Army soldiers from the 331st Rifle Division shot two mothers who opposed the rape of their daughters, and a father, whose daughter was at the same time pulled out of the kitchen and raped

Soviet officer. Further, the following were killed: a married couple of teachers with 3 children, an unknown refugee girl, an innkeeper and a farmer, whose 21-year-old daughter was raped. In Petershagen near Preussisch Eylau, soldiers of this division killed two men and a 16-year-old boy named Richard von Hoffmann, subjecting women and girls to severe violence.

In early February 1945, Soviet troops unexpectedly broke into the western part of Samland, capturing a large number of settlements. A few days later, the Germans managed to defeat and partially push back the advanced forces and, in the course of a bold offensive operation on a large scale, on February 19-20, 1945, restore the interrupted land and sea communications with Koenigsberg. The command of the Samland Army Group and the Army Group North, with the help of the police, conducted investigations into the fate of the population in the newly liberated territory, the results of which are available, however, only for a few settlements.

Thus, servicemen of the 39th Army killed 4 civilians in Georgenwald and threw the corpses into the flames of a set fire to the estate ... In Kragau, servicemen of the 91st Guards Rifle Division raped and strangled two young women, in Medenau, servicemen of the 358th Rifle Division killed at least 11 civilians. Here, in front of a house, lay the corpses of two murdered women, a small child and a nursing infant. Two elderly men and a 14-year-old boy were beaten, in the same way - two women and two girls after being raped. The completely naked body of a 30-year-old woman had stab wounds on her chest, her skull was dissected, she was riddled with gunshots. In Gross-Ladtkaim, servicemen of the 91st Guards Rifle Division shot 2 German prisoners of war and 4 civilians, including the burgomaster and his wife. There was no trace of their 18-year-old daughter. However, the corpse of a young girl was found, whose breasts were cut off and her eyes gouged out after being raped.

In Krattlau, servicemen of the 275th Guards Rifle Regiment of the 91st Guards Rifle Division killed 6 men and two

German soldiers. All women and girls, including 13-year-olds, were continuously raped, some women **"were subjected to sexual violence by 6-8 soldiers 5-8 times a day."** In Annenthal, the German liberators found the bodies of two women, who were defiled (one on a dunghill) and then strangled. A detailed investigation was carried out in Germau, where the headquarters of the 91st Guards Rifle Division and the 275th Guards Rifle Regiment were located.

In Germau, the bodies of 21 dead were found - men, women and children. 11 people could not stand the monstrous torture and committed suicide themselves. 15 German wounded were killed by breaking their heads, one of them was pushed into the throat of a harmonica ... Two girls were found near the Hermau Palmnikken [now Yantarny] road. Both were shot in the head at close range, one had gouged out eyes...

On the approaches to Metgeten (a resort suburb of Königsberg), the corpses of several hundred German soldiers were found, partly mutilated beyond recognition. Killed men, women and children were lying in almost all houses and gardens, women had obvious signs of rape, their breasts were often cut off, two 20-year-old girls were torn apart by cars. There was at least one train with refugees from Königsberg at the station. In each carriage lay the bodies of **"brutally murdered refugees of every age and sex."** The tennis court at Metgeten was packed to capacity with German prisoners of war and civilians, and then an explosive charge was set off. Parts of human bodies were found even 200 meters from a giant explosive funnel.

On February 27, 1945, the captain from the headquarters of the commandant of the fortress Sommer accidentally discovered behind one house in a gravel pit at the road intersection in front of Metgeten the corpses of 12 completely naked women and children, lying together in a "messy **pile**", they were torn to pieces by bayonets and knives. In addition to individual corpses scattered throughout the resort village, of which there were hundreds, several large earthen hills were found, under

which, as it turned out, were buried hundreds (according to Captain Sommer and Professor Dr. Ipsen - 3000) killed. The investigation by the commission, appointed by the commandant of the fortress, General of the Infantry Lash, was difficult, as the Soviet troops doused the heaps of corpses with gasoline and tried to burn them. Nevertheless, it was possible to establish that most of the victims were not shot, but often brutally killed with slashing and stabbing weapons ...

West of Metgethen, according to Captain Sommer, along the road as far as Powayen, the corpses of civilians lay everywhere, either shot in the back of the head, or " **completely naked, raped and then brutally killed by blows of bayonets or rifle butts.**" At a road junction in front of Powayen, four naked women were crushed by a Soviet tank. Captain Sommer, as well as Major Professor Dr. Ipsen, testified to a downright symbolic infamy: a young girl was crucified in the church of Gross-Heidekrug, and a German soldier was hanged to the right and left of her ... "

This is where we will stop the kaleidoscope of monstrous events reflected in the documents collected by I. Hoffmann from the German archives. Now let's try to "tweak up the sharpness" and see how THIS happened in one, separately taken German city. Not even a city, but a small Silesian town with a population of only 17 thousand people.

Human.

Striegau. Until recently, this name did not mean anything to anyone (unlike, for example, Nemmersdorf, where a lot of paper has already been written about the tragic events). One of the many German cities and towns of Lower Saxony, at the behest of Stalin after the Second World War turned out to be part of Poland. Before the war, about 17-20 thousand people lived in Striegau, by the beginning of February 1945 the flow of refugees increased the population of the town to 30 thousand (although, of course, no one can give exact numbers today).

On February 13, 1945, the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front occupied Striegau. Four weeks later, the town was back in German hands in one of the last attempts by the Wehrmacht to launch a counteroffensive. In Striegau, German troops found 30 (thirty) living inhabitants and about two hundred uncleaned corpses. Presumably, 13-15 thousand people fled the city before it was occupied by Soviet troops, the rest were expelled from their homes, partially sent to forced labor in the USSR (in total , **267 thousand people** were taken out of Germany and Eastern Europe for forced labor in the USSR). Germans - not counting prisoners of war).

Employees of the German criminal police and members of the funeral teams in their written reports described what appeared to their eyes in the deserted city. Two German historians ("neo-fascists", in the terms of Comrade Rzheshhevsky) Martin Bojanowski and Erich Bosdorf published these testimonies in their book Striegau. The Fate of a Silesian City", which the German Federal Government's Scientific Commission for the Study of the History of the Expulsion has attracted as documentary material.

Reports of the dead in Striegau were divided into "group finds and single finds" with an exact indication of the street and house. It looked like this:

- ***"in the gutter lies the corpse of a teenager about 14 years old, crushed by heavy vehicles, shot in the back of the head" - "a partially naked***

dead woman lies on the sofa, two shots in the mouth" - "the corpse of a 72-year-

old woman with gouged out eyes" - "a corpse crushed by a box shot woman." - "among the pieces of glass and china in the looted shop is the corpse of an elderly woman who was shot dead with her lower body naked" - "three

men, two women and a child of about two years old, shot" - "a

woman of 30-35 years old with a naked lower part of her body, next to a few meters an older woman, clasping her ru-

kami tree, shot dead"

- "the corpse of a man with leg prostheses, next to his wife and child, shot dead"

- "three elderly women with naked lower body and traces of rape, shot dead; in the attic of the house is the corpse of an elderly man, hung upside down" - "the

corpse of a man hangs on the door latch, in the attic there are two naked female corpses with traces of sadistic rape, shot dead; on the couch, a boy of about 12 years old, shot dead, on the bed, the naked corpse of an 18-year-old girl with traces of sadistic rape, shot dead" - "an elderly couple shot dead in the

basement, eyes gouged out..."

In addition to numerous brutal murders, funeral teams recorded numerous cases of suicides in Striegau, including group ones: ***- "three female corpses***

and one child, suicide by gas" - "suicide of a married couple by

hanging on a window frame; in the basement the corpses of one man and two girls of different ages, suicide by hanging" - "four female corpses and one teenager, death

by gassing" - "two female corpses, suicide by gassing" - "mother and daughter

sitting at the table, suicide by gassing" - "a woman opened her

arteries, but before that she strangled her daughter lying next to her with a rolled

towel" - "in the attic, two elderly women, one young woman, a girl of about 20 years old and a girl of 10-11 years old were hanged next to each other, all with traces of rape.

The details of this collective suicide in the attic in the house number 5 on Ziganstrasse are known, as it is not incredible, from one of the participants in the terrible event. A letter has been preserved to this woman (she

then was 47 years old), which she wrote to the son of one of the dead women. Omitting, out of respect for the reader, the description of endless gang rapes ("sexual conflicts," as General of the Army I. Tretyak put it), let's go straight to the end of the letter:

"... At about 10 o'clock in the morning it became calmer, and we all went to the apartment of the young Frau K., her 11-year-old daughter Trauteul was also raped. There we cooked some food. But then steps were heard again, and everything repeated again. We shouted, we begged them to finally leave us alone, but they did not know pity. We all agreed to hang ourselves. But again someone came. When at last they left, we ran as quickly as possible to the attic. Frau R. hanged herself first. Young Frau K. first hanged her daughter Trauteul, and then she hanged herself. Your mother did the same with your sister (ie, the mother hanged her own daughter - M.S.).

And here we are, just the two of us, your mother and I. I asked her to make a noose for me, I myself was not able to do this due to excitement. We hugged one last time and threw away the travel basket we were standing on. I still got my feet to the floor, the rope was too long. I looked to the right, then to the left, everyone was hanging in a row, everyone was dead. I had no choice but to try to free myself from the rope ... "

Are the above information correct? Is it possible to trust documents, reports, testimonies from only one, i.e. German, side? Where is the expert opinion of independent and unbiased witnesses? Alas, he is not. Where are the documents of the investigation files of the Soviet military tribunals? Where are the reports of the Soviet military prosecutor's office? They don't exist either. Why should we believe the statements of one, and clearly interested, side?

The question is good. A strong question. Fully consistent with the "new thinking", norms and principles

legal state. The rule of law, as you know, implies the presence of a large population of lawyers. The unshakable principle of advocacy is known: "I'm not interested in whether my client committed the crime he is accused of, but I will prove that the accusation does not correspond to the letter of the law." Judging by the fact that many lawyers become wealthy people, this principle works well.

And yet, not always and not all murderers and rapists, brazenly smiling, go free directly from the courtroom. Fortunately, a paid lawyer is not the only participant in the process - there are still jurors, there are judges who have the same legal right to make a decision *ex aequo et bono* (in conscience and justice), relying not only on the letter of the law, but also on "inner conviction" (This, by the way, is a term completely legalized by the Russian Code of Criminal Procedure).

In conscience and justice, it should be clear to everyone that the monstrous crimes committed during the years of the Second World War are by no means always (if not to put it harsher: "almost never") can be established within the framework of formal bureaucratic procedures. What "commission of independent experts from neutral Switzerland" established the fact of the brutal murder of the inhabitants of the Belarusian village of Khatyn? Where are the documents? Where are the independent witnesses? However, some documents, oddly enough, survived. In the archive. Therefore, they can rightly be called "archival documents" (for some readers, these two words have a magical effect). In the report of the commander of the 118th police battalion (formed from prisoners of war of the Red Army in Kiev), the punitive operation carried out in Khatyn on March 22, 1943, is described as follows: "... The village was

surrounded and attacked from all sides. The enemy put up stubborn ***resistance and fired from all the houses, so that heavy weapons had to be used - anti-tank guns and heavy mortars.***

action along with 34 bandits killed many villagers. Some of them died in the flames..."

So, archival documents "irrefutably" testify: the battle, the enemy, the bandits, part of the inhabitants died in the flames. Accidentally, presumably...

And if we - quite rightly - consider such arguments as blasphemy, as well as any other attempts to cast doubt on the reality of the mass crimes committed by the Nazis and their accomplices on Soviet soil, then why, in relation to the crimes of which German women and children became victims, should a different standard apply?

On August 31, 1941, Pravda published an article by A.N. Tolstoy "The face of the Nazi army." 66 years later, a book by A. Dyukov was published, in which, with reference to this article, it is reported that ***"on the outskirts of a village near Bialystok, five corpses of women were stuck on five pointed stakes. The corpses were naked, with open bellies, cut off breasts and cut off heads. Heads women were lying in a pool of blood along with the corpses of murdered children."*** How could an outstanding Soviet writer, being a thousand kilometers from Bialystok, occupied by the Germans in the first days of the war, be convinced of such horrific details of the crime? And if an article in "Pravda" of the wartime (and even written by an author known for his "principledness" who two years earlier in the same newspaper and in almost the same terms depicted the atrocities of the Polish army, fleeing under the blows of a friendly at that time Wehrmacht) should be considered a "document", then why should thousands of testimonies given under oath by very specific people and published on behalf of the Commission of the Federal Government of Democratic Germany be considered less reliable?

Yes, each individual report of war crimes may, when carefully checked, turn out to be inaccurate, exaggerated, or even completely fictitious (not to mention the fact that

In the vast majority of cases, verification that complies with strict legal regulations will be practically impossible). And at the same time, the entire set of events recorded in such an "archive" as folk memory cannot but be true.

However, one should not think that attempts to verify (more precisely, to refute at any cost) reports of brutal massacres against the civilian population of Germany were not made. Even as they were undertaken, with great noise and fanfare. For example, in 2008, the Yauza-EKSMO publishing house published a collection of articles entitled "We have nothing to repent for!" (a stunning call for a country whose population, according to sociological surveys of recent years, considers itself Orthodox by three-quarters). In the preface to the collection, the above-mentioned A. Dyukov writes (or rather, shouts): "... ***They are trying to deprive***

us of the Great Victory. We are told that the Victory turned into the enslavement of Eastern Europe, that Soviet soldiers raped Germany ... Russia will have nothing left but pay and repent, repent and pay, turning from a subject into an object of international politics (in a strange way, Mr. Dyukov does not notice that democratic Germany both pays and repents, and at the same time remains one of the most influential subjects of world politics) ... Time does not ***wait If we do not want our grandfathers and great-grandfathers to be called murderers, drunkards and marauders, if we do not want our children to be taught to spit on the graves of their ancestors ...*** "

After such "artillery preparation" an article appeared in the collection entitled "Nemmersdorf: Between Truth and Propaganda" (author I. Petrov). So what is the truth?

The article begins with the fact that I. Petrov quite frankly admits: ***"I will say right away: the materials available at the moment practically do not allow one to doubt that the killing of civilians in Nemmersdorf was the work of soldiers and officers of the Red Army."*** Further states another, very strange and

an undeniably regrettable fact: ***"If some archives contain reports of special officers about what happened in Nemmersdorf, then historians have not yet received access to them."*** I remind you: "bye" is 64 years later.

What then is the multi-page article about? The whole clumsy attempt to "expose" comes down to the search for small and smallest inaccuracies, inconsistencies and inconsistencies in the available German documents and evidence (***"Lieutenant Zirn saw 7 killed, non-commissioned officer Scheible - 11, and only Major Braumüller talks about 15 ... not in one report does not mention a shot in the right eye, which, according to Hinrichs's report, killed one of the girls ... no one saw the person nailed to the door, the conclusion is made on the basis of wounds on the hands and the testimony of a seriously wounded witness, then taken away in an unknown direction and subsequently unidentified..."***).

Of course, there are many such inconsistencies. They could not be few, given the circumstances of the time and the manner of action of all the participants in the tragedy. The main "achievement" of the researcher is the assertion that "only" 26 civilians were killed in Nemmersdorf itself, and the figure 70 adopted in Western historiography refers to the number of those killed both in Nemmersdorf itself and on the farms and estates adjacent to it. There is no need to repent of killing civilians, because ... Yes, of course, because we must now, in 2008, check our words with the deeds of Dr. Goebbels: "Goebbels propaganda needed a

scarecrow for the population of the eastern provinces of the Reich, and ***Soviet the soldiers, having shot the elderly, women and children, played into her hands. The terrible colors and bloody details were mostly added by the propagandists themselves ... "***

Sometimes the desperate unwillingness to call facts by their proper names acquires a completely farcical character. Thus, the Russian Internet portal Infox.ru posted on January 12, 2009 a message that in the ancient Prussian city of Marienburg (now Malbork, Poland)

during construction work, a mass grave was discovered. About 1800 people, including women and children, were buried naked, without clothes, shoes, belts, glasses and dental crowns. More than 100 skulls had clear traces of bullet holes. The original article in the British newspaper The Guardian had the title "Remains of 1,800 German civilians found in wartime massgrave". The subtitle of the article suggested that "men, women and children" (men, women and children) "have been killed as Red Army captured town" (they were killed when the Red Army occupied the city).

It is hard to believe that in Moscow the golden-domed one could not find an interpreter capable of dealing with the phrase "German civilians" (German civilians). However, the article in the Russian online publication was titled "Mass Grave of German Soldiers Found in Poland", and the subtitle said even more interestingly: ***"Experts suspect that these are Poles who died from Soviet weapons"...***

Times, however, are changing, and in 2008 an article appeared in which, without the slightest reservation or equivocation, the monstrous facts were named in the most direct text: "... 14 million

Germans were ***expelled from their homes, only 12 million managed to get to Germany alive ... The expulsion of Germans from Eastern Europe was accompanied by massive organized violence ... the remaining German population was driven***

to concentration camps; adults were used forced labor, and in the winter of 1945/1946, the death rate in the camps reached 50%. So,

in the Potulice camp between 1947 and 1949, half of the prisoners died from hunger, cold, illness and bullying by the guards ...

One of the most monstrous cases occurred on the night of June 18-19, 1945 in the city of Prerau, where 265 Germans were shot, including 120 women and 74 children. The oldest of those killed was 80 years old, and the youngest was eight months old ... "

Moreover, this article ("Expelled and Killed") was published not by some kind of printed sheet of temporarily unfinished liberals "jacking at the doors of Western embassies", but by the quite respectable, expensive and solid magazine "Expert" (No. 30 of July 28, 2008). It should be noted that the editorial staff of the magazine positions its offspring as ***"one of the most influential weekly analytical publications in Russia, which has earned a reputation as the undisputed leader of the business journal press"***, and the general director of the media holding "Expert" Mr. Fadeev concurrently is the director of the Institute close to "United Russia" public design and chairman of the commission in the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation.

The most amazing thing about the publication of "Expert" is that no one was outraged! Nobody! Neither comrade Gareev, who "as if in good spirits" had not heard of cases of rape (not to mention murders), nor comrade Rzheshhevsky, who invariably demanded that "weighty documentary grounds be presented for making such grave accusations", nor comrade Dyukov, who was extremely worried that Russia will have to "pay and repent" ...

And the solution is extremely simple. It boils down to a single three-letter word: PRO.

After the former allies under the Warsaw Pact joined NATO, and even agreed to deploy elements of the American missile defense system on their territory, a memory suddenly erupted in some Russian historians and journalists. They immediately recalled long-known facts (half a century ago, back in 1957, Voenizdat published a collection of articles by German authors, World War 1939-1945, in which, on p. 598, the loss of the civilian population of the eastern regions of Germany was estimated at **1 - 1.55 million people**) and hastened to remind Poland and the Czech Republic of some forgotten episodes of their post-war history.

The article in "Expert" is written in the highest degree "balanced and politically restrained." The main emphasis is on the expulsion of the German population from the Czech Republic and the areas of eastern Ukraine transferred to Poland.

Germany; in a short tongue twister - about the events in Hungary and Romania (there is no American missile defense there and is not expected there yet) and not a single word (!!!) about Yugoslavia ("fraternal Serbia opposing NATO aggression"), where in 44-45. 69 thousand people died - one in three of the 200 thousand Germans who did not have time to escape from the country. And what goes without saying - not a single word "Expert" remembered that in the cities and towns of East Prussia, which had gone to the Soviet Union, the Germans were expelled and killed in the same way as in the areas of East Prussia and Pomerania transferred to Poland; that Comrade Stalin also bears some responsibility for the events that took place in the territory of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia occupied by the Red Army; that the puppet "Polish government" of Comrade Bierut, without the consent of Moscow, is not something that three million Germans - three stools in their own office would not dare to move from place to place ...

Completing the sad list of the facts of mass deportation and massacres of the German population, it only remains for me to inform the reader that I deceived him. And three times.

In the above excerpts from I. Hoffmann's book, I inserted three episodes from the memoirs of L.N. medals). His memoirs (published in the Znamya magazine, No. 2/2005) almost verbatim coincide with the testimonies cited by I. Hoffman. And this despite the fact that "plagiarism" (or unconscious copying) is impossible in principle: Hoffmann died three years before the publication of Rabichev's memoirs, and his book "Stalin's War of Annihilation" was published in Russian only in 2006.

Without visible "joints" and "seams" in quotes from I. Hoffmann's book, one could also insert this passage from the memorandum of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League N. Mikhailov, sent on March 29, 1945 to the Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union

Communist Party of Bolsheviks G. Malenkov : ***"On the night of February 23-24, a group of officers and cadets in the amount of 35 people appeared drunk on the Grutenneng estate,***

cordoned off the manor, put up machine guns, fired on and wounded a Red Army soldier guarding the building. After that, the organized rape of the girls and women who were on the farm began ... " But such an insertion "would be an unacceptable forgery, since Mikhailov's report was not at all about atrocities against the civilian population of Germany, but about" a ***wild and boorish attitude to the liberated Soviet girls and women***". With machine guns in their hands, ***"a group of officers and cadets in the amount of 35 people"*** stormed the temporary accommodation center for "Ostarbeiters" released from Nazi captivity ...

Unfortunately, I know what a significant part of readers now want to hear with growing impatience. Alas, I have to declare with all certainty: "You will not wait." The premeditated brutal murders of women and children cannot be justified. None. It is sad that the \$147 per barrel "getting up from your knees" poisoned the minds of many of my compatriots to such an extent that they are no longer able to understand what a monstrous insult to the memory of the fallen soldiers of the Great Patriotic War is the reasoning that "the Nazis ALSO killed women and children..."

There is no topic for discussion here, and I will not waste time on empty moralizing. Normal people will understand me. I can't convince the wild ones. For those who are not hopeless, I will still quote a few lines from an article by I. Ehrenburg, published in Krasnaya Zvezda on March 14, 1945. They quite clearly explain the difference between bestial malice and the noble hatred of a liberator soldier for the enemy: "Yesterday I received a ***letter from a man***

who is no more. There is a trace of blood on a sheet of paper. Officer Boris Antonovich Kurilko died on German soil, defending the freedom and honor of our Motherland. His comrades forwarded the letter to me, and I want Comrade Kurilko's last words to reach my readers, how they reached me Here is what an officer of the Red Army wrote on the eve of his death:

"The fire of hatred supported us in the most difficult days. Now we are in Germany. Our hatred leads us to Berlin. The Germans think that we will do on their soil what they did on ours. These executioners cannot understand the greatness of the Soviet warrior. We will be harsh, but fair, and never, never will our people humiliate

themselves..." Pride overflows my heart when I hold this sheet of paper: on it is the blood of a hero and on it are words written in blood, lofty, beautiful words. We defeat fascism not only on the battlefield, we defeat it in a moral duel between evil and good ... Our

hatred is a lofty feeling, it requires judgment, and not reprisals, punishment, and not violence The Soviet soldier did not come to Germany for prey, not for junk, not for concubines, he came to Germany for

justice ... The defender of Stalingrad, the soldier of Yelnya, Rzhev and Sevastopol is higher than the Germans: higher not by "blood" - let's leave the low "Aryans" their low inventions - higher in consciousness, in conscience, heart. He despises the Germans, despises their tinsel, their junk, their flags, their newspapers, their women, their yesterday's arrogance and today's obsequiousness. He didn't co

Another topic, which, in the opinion of many, could not be kept silent, is the bombing of Germany by Anglo-American aircraft. Yes, indeed, massive bombardments (in particular, non-targeted night bombings "in areas") led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of unarmed Germans, women and children; deprived millions of people of their homes and property, turned the greatest monuments of European history and architecture into piles of rubble. However, in this article, I quite consciously did not discuss this topic. And not only because the strategic bombing of Germany was carried out by the Allies, at least **with the full consent of the Soviet side** (as for the infamous bombing of Dresden, it took place at the direct request of Stalin, who accused the Allies in Yalta of deliberate unwillingness to destroy transport highways of eastern Germany). There is a much more significant reason.

The bombing of German cities by Allied aircraft was part of the WAR strategy. Allied aircraft destroyed factories that produced weapons for Hitler, destroyed railway stations that transported Hitler's troops, killed and terrorized German workers who (perhaps not always of their own free will) worked for Hitler. The condition under which the bombing would be stopped was brought to the attention of the Germans: the complete and unconditional surrender of the aggressor country. The Western Allies unconditionally fulfilled this promise - not a single bomb fell on any German city after the signing of the act of surrender of Germany. Moreover, even during the war - as far as I know - the Allies did not bomb a single German city in the occupied / liberated territory. Although they had enough bombs and aviation gasoline, it was possible to express "the feeling of revenge for the destroyed Coventry" in such a technically complex way. On the other hand, the brutal reprisals against the civilian population of Germany in the territories controlled by the Red Army began just after the capture of these territories and the suppression of armed resistance, and the signing of the act of unconditional surrender did little to change this nightmare ...

I repeat once again - crimes against humanity have neither justification nor statute of limitations. The purpose of this article is by no means belated moralizing, but the search for **the real reasons** that made possible the tragic and shameful events on German soil. Looking for **explanations, not excuses**. And in my opinion, this question is not at all simple.

The desire to avenge the monstrous atrocities committed by the invaders on Soviet soil, of course, took place. However, not always and not every desire is realized in actions, and not every desire of ordinary soldiers is approved and allowed by commanders. Finally, in addition to external control, every person also has self-control. Maybe I remain an incorrigible idealist, but it's hard for me to believe that a normal Russian peasant, drafted into the army from a Smolensk village, baptized in childhood,

brought up in a working-class family could nail German children to the table with their tongues and crucify women on the altars of temples.

Among the many peoples that inhabited the multinational Soviet Union, there were peoples who remembered the laws of "blood feud", but I have never heard that these customs involve the brutal group rape of the wife and daughters of a "blood" enemy. And it seems to me that those who attribute to the soldiers of the Red Army SUCH ways of realizing a feeling of hatred for the enemy have surpassed Goebbels himself with his thesis about the "Asian hordes of Bolsheviks" ...

Putting aside pathos, we can also state a quite definite, firmly established - and very strange against the background of all of the above - fact: German prisoners of war in the Soviet rear were not shot, tortured, crucified on barn doors, not crushed with bulldozers. The attitude of the civilian population of the Soviet rear towards the captured Germans was surprisingly tolerant. And this is not "red propaganda", but a fact known for certain to millions of contemporaries of the events.

No, of course, Soviet captivity was not a "rest home"; prisoners were used for hard work, they had to live in an unusual cold climate for them and in the conditions of hunger and deprivation familiar to Soviet people. Taking into account the fact that many German soldiers were captured wounded, frostbitten, sick, the difficult conditions of detention led to a huge death rate: according to the most conservative official estimates, more than 450 thousand German soldiers and officers died in Soviet captivity. Recognizing this, by no means a joyful fact, one cannot fail to see something else: cases of deliberate, especially sadistic, murders of German prisoners were extremely rare even in the front line; in the rear camps for prisoners of war, if they did occur, then only as the rarest emergency.

German prisoners working at construction sites and mines received 600 g of bread (the standard ration of a Soviet worker, and this is more than the norm for non-working "dependents"), and compassionate Russians

women sometimes fed unarmed and helpless enemies (which German soldiers recalled with surprise and gratitude many years later). Hundreds of thousands of German prisoners in Soviet military hospitals were provided with qualified medical care that brought them back to life.

With all the reservations that there is no place for normal human logic in war, it is difficult to combine the many years of humane treatment of disarmed German soldiers (and many of them had the blood of peaceful Soviet citizens on their hands) and the alleged "spontaneous explosion" of wild hatred for German women and children, who, for some unknown reason, overwhelmed the army in the last months of the war.

At least as a working hypothesis, it should be assumed that the "thirst for revenge" that seized the soldiers of the Red Army at the moment of crossing the borders of Germany was not the **only, and not the most important among the reasons that** led to the terrible events on German soil. It is not so difficult to see other, more significant factors.

The first (if not the first in importance, then quite obvious and indisputable) should be called the catastrophic fall in military discipline, which fall, of course, did not fall from the sky, but was quite naturally due to the open and massive looting of command personnel.

Usually, with any attempt to discuss the topic of violence against the civilian population of Germany, voices are immediately heard, hastening to recall that "the Soviet command gave order after order ..." The absolute truth. Order after order (we'll talk about them a little later). But in order to understand the real picture of events, it seems to me immeasurably more important to quote not numerous orders in which marauders were threatened with terrible punishments, up to and including execution, but this, now widely known, protocol of the search of the dacha of the former Commander-in-Chief of the group of Soviet occupation forces in Germany, "Marshal Victory" G.K. Zhukov:

"... Two rooms of the dacha have been turned into a warehouse where a huge amount of various kinds of goods and valuables is stored. For example: woolen fabrics, silk, brocade, pan-velvet and other materials - over 4000 meters in total; furs - sable, monkey, fox, seal, astrakhan, astrakhan - 323 skins in total, chevro of the highest quality - 35 skins, expensive large-sized carpets and tapestries taken from Potsdam and other palaces and houses in Germany - 44 pieces in total ... valuable paintings of classical painting in large sizes in artistic frames - 55 in total pieces hung in the rooms of the cottage and partially stored in a warehouse; expensive sets, tableware and tea utensils (porcelain with artistic decoration, crystal) - 7 large boxes; silver sets of cutlery and tea utensils - 2 boxes; accordions with rich artistic decoration - 8 pieces There are only 20 unique hunting rifles from Goland-Goland and others ... All the furnishings, from furniture, carpets, dishes, decorations and ending with curtains on the windows, are foreign, mainly German. There is literally not a single thing of Soviet origin in the dacha, with the exception of the paths that lie at the entrance to the dacha. There is not a single Soviet book in the dacha, but on the other hand, there are a large number of books in beautiful gold-embossed bindings in bookcases, exclusively in German. Entering the house, it is hard to imagine that you are near Moscow, and not in Germany ... "

This protocol was signed by the Minister of State Security of the USSR Abakumov on January 10, 1948. On January 20, 1948, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All **-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, "having heard the message of the commission composed of comrades Zhdanov, Bulganin, Kuznetsov and Shkiryatov"**, adopted a special resolution "On comrade G.K. Zhukov", in which, in particular, it was noted that **"Zhukov's subordinates, obedient to him, took away paintings and other valuable things in palaces and mansions, broke into a safe in a jewelry store in Lodz (this is not Germany, this is" liberated "Poland - M.S.), confiscating those in valuables, etc. As a result of all this, the Zhukovs appropriated up to 70 valuable gold items (pendants and rings with precious stones, watches, diamond earrings, bracelets, brooches, etc.), up to 7**

different silver items..." (RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 2198, ll. 28 - 29).

In this document, the most important thing for us will be the mention of "Zhukov's subordinates." Of course, the marshal and commander of the front did not himself crawl through the ruins of "palaces and mansions" in search of prey, for such cases there were colonels from his retinue. But the colonels did not personally smoke safes in a jewelry store and did not collect "monkey skins and astrakhan skins." The practical work was entrusted to the majors and captains, who took with them - for order and protection - a platoon of submachine gunners under the command of a lieutenant, and the lieutenant had a driver in a Jeep, a junior sergeant, and the guy was also not a miss. Alas, the sergeants had to turn in diamond earrings to the authorities, but some small things were lying around in their pockets ... This whole "logical chain" has long had a clear and quite unambiguous explanation in Russian: "The fish rots from the head."

Exclusively and only from the head. With such behavior of senior commanders, the junior sergeant could be read out as many and as many orders as they wanted. This changed little in the situation when the Charter was tacitly replaced by "concepts". From that moment on, the Red Army began to change rapidly. Even externally: "...

This avalanche of troops moving from east to west had a colorful, picturesque look. Tanks, smoky, splashed with mud, were covered with colorful, bright carpets, and sat on carpets

grubby tankers in black soaked in machine oil

jackets. Someone pulled out a bottle from his bosom and, throwing back his head, drank from the neck - he passed it on to a neighbor and in a hoarse voice, trying to shout over the roar of the engine and the rattle of caterp
screaming out the lyrics...

The gun servants, whose destiny is to shake on the charging boxes, were surrounded by soft sofa cushions embroidered with silk, and felt excellent: they chirped on German harmonicas, stretched the bellows of accordions richly trimmed with mother-of-pearl and silver.

In the stream of tanks, guns, motor vehicles, army carts, one often came across an old landowner's carriage - covered, with

mirrored doors and lanterns, or a long landau with lacquered flaps. Young officers and soldiers sat in the carriages - in overcoats with shoulder straps, machine guns over their shoulders, but in top hats and with umbrellas ... "

Indeed, the view was very colorful. As I. Hoffman writes, ***"The Red Army was in a state of growing savagery ... Soviet soldiers switched to wearing Napoleonic hats instead of the prescribed headdress, wearing canes, umbrellas, rubber raincoats, thereby becoming more and more acquiring the appearance of robbers and marauders."*** Can the German "neo-fascist historian" be trusted? It is possible and necessary, because further Hoffmann quotes the orders preserved in the military archive of Germany. For example, order No. 006 of the Military Council of the 2nd Belorussian Front of January 22, 1945, which stated that ***"along with robberies, looting, arson, mass drunkenness is observed ... cars are loaded with all kinds of household items, seized food and civilian clothes to such an extent that have become a burden on the troops, limit their freedom of movement and reduce the striking power of tank formations."*** About carriages, cylinders and umbrellas, it was also mentioned in the order of the commander of the 1st Ukrainian Front, Marshal I.S. there was room for

crew.

Endemic looting has become so commonplace and commonplace that even in the official report of the Main Trophy Directorate of the Red Army, 60 thousand pianos and pianos, 460 thousand radios, 190 thousand carpets, 940 thousand pieces of furniture were mentioned in the general list of "war trophies" , 265 thousand wall and table clocks. As for wrist and pocket watches, the "collection" of which in the spring of 1945 acquired the character of mass insanity in the Red Army, the number of these "trophies" is incalculable...

Military discipline, in a certain sense, is extremely similar to pregnancy: you either have it or you don't. There is no intermediate state. And if in the army it became "possible" to knock down the door with a rifle butt, break into a house, rip off gold earrings from the ears of frightened women, turn everything upside down in search of the ill-fated hours and booze, then a very thin line separated such actions from the next steps in the matter of "revenge for the desecrated Soviet land". What about orders? Yes, there were orders; those who, to their misfortune, fell "under a hot hand" could be severely punished. One of such cases is colorfully described in the autobiographical story by M. M. Koryakov (an excerpt from which was quoted above). Fight for discipline

looked like this:

"... The soldier stood at attention in front of the colonel in a black lady's hat shifted to the back of his head, decorated with flowers and fruits. In the carriage, which the soldier took away from the yard of some Silesian landowner, there was a yellow pig carcass, and strangled chickens were tied to the lanterns. "Pork? Are you

dissatisfied with our Soviet rations?" the colonel shouted and hit the soldier on the cheek with a hand wrapped in a kid glove. "Did you read Comrade Stalin's order of January 19?" Did

you read it too?" "We did, Comrade Colonel." "So what the hell are you doing!" the colonel barked and looked around with drunken, bullish eyes, looking for something to do to a soldier. rope near the lantern, and he tore off one, grabbed it by the neck and backhanded it with a chicken in the face of a soldier.

The colonel was drunk. In the jeep, on a seat covered with a carpet, lay a pot-bellied bottle braided with rods. Swaying, legs wide apart, he approached the "jeep" and, climbing in, threatened the soldier:

- You will respect the orders of Comrade Stalin! I will teach you!"

For the sake of truth, it should be noted that this colonel was very lucky - he was drunk, and the soldier was sober. With drunk Soviet

soldiers in "defeated Germany" it was better not to get involved. The same Koryakov (a battle captain who went through the entire war from Moscow to Silesia) writes:

"On the Wilhelmstrasse in Bunzlau, I survived the worst night of my life. Not under bombing, say, in Volyn, where the city was completely demolished in one night Sarny - not at the forefront under the fire of German six-barreled mortars - nowhere did I experience such fear as here, in this peaceful German quarter ... We went to bed at ten in the evening.

The door locks were broken, a table and buckets were put to the doors with coal. Less than half an hour passed, as the door shook, the barricade moved ... Tankers ... Six. Not only soldiers, but also officers. Pistols out, in their belts. Paying no attention to me, they stomped up the stairs "Upstairs, above the ceiling, there were women's cries, the crying of children. In agitation, I began to dress. The girl and the old Wunsch begged me not to go there: they would kill me! Last night, they killed an officer of the city commandant's office, who was trying to prevent violence.

All night we listened in fear to the cries of unfortunate women, weeping children and the clatter, the clatter of heavy soldiers' boots overhead..."

M. Koryakov's personal memories are fully confirmed by the documents of the German military archives. So, on February 10, 1945, Captain B., commander of the battalion of the 510th Infantry Regiment of the 154th Infantry Division, went over to the side of the enemy. He explained his act - rather extraordinary for the last weeks of the war - by the fact that he shot two of his subordinates, who were caught at the time of the group rape of a German girl, and ***"could no longer watch how the Red Army treated the civilian population."*** A junior lieutenant from the 287th Rifle Division, who was taken prisoner, testified during interrogation that several officers of his unit, who tried to prevent violence against the civilian population, were shot dead by inflamed Red Army soldiers. On the contrary, Captain E., a battalion commander from the 4th Guards Tank Corps, on February 2, 1945, shot his subordinate, who tried to intercede for a woman raped by Captain E.. In the village of Germau, occupied

units of the 91st Guards Rifle Division, the Soviet military commandant, in order to save German women from violence, gathered them in the church premises and posted armed guards, who were ordered to shoot at the Red Army soldiers if necessary ...

The "growing savagery" of the Red Army had another reason - a radical change in the composition and human "quality" of the draft contingent.

Russia is great, but even she could not endlessly feed the gluttonous monster of many years of war with millions of young men. Nearly five million people were in the Armed Forces of the USSR by the time the war began. According to the Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Armed Forces of June 22, 1941, 10 million people were mobilized. Then, according to the decree of the State Defense Committee of August 11, 1941 - another 4 million. In the autumn of the 41st, those already born in 1890 were called up, i.e. fifty year old men. Another 2 million entered the army through the so-called. "civil uprising". The waves of mobilization in 1941 swallowed up without a trace the entire stock of trained reservists who had completed active military service accumulated in the pre-war decade. But the voracious monster demanded more and more new blood. From January 1 to March 1, 1942, another 700 thousand people were mobilized... Of course, many millions of men remained in the rear, but the army of the 20th century could not fight and win with sticks and stones. And in order to fight with tanks, cannons and aircraft, in order to provide all these mountains of military equipment with ammunition, fuel, spare parts, at least five workers and grain growers had to work behind the back of one soldier.

By the second half of 1944, by the time the advancing Red Army approached the borders of Germany and its allies, there were practically no Komsomol volunteers left in its ranks who besieged the military registration and enlistment offices in June 41st. The phrase "passed the whole war from the Bug to the Volga and from the Volga to the Elbe" - unless it is a newspaper stamp on duty - can only be applied to people of a completely unique fate, "born in a shirt" ... Five months in the infantry. Eleven months in tank troops.

Statistics mercilessly testify that after that the next unit of "personnel" passed into the category of irretrievable (killed, missing) or sanitary (wounded, sick, frostbite) losses. Moreover, these are statistics from 43-45, which do not reflect the catastrophic losses of the first year of the war!

And yet, by the end of 1944, there were 6.7 million people in the Active Army alone (that is, without taking into account the rear, training, transport, sanitary units and institutions of the Armed Forces). Where did they get them from?

The boys of the war years grew up and reached military age - hungry, thin, who grew up in conditions of actual homelessness (father at the front, mother - from dawn to dusk at the factory), brought up by a fairly criminalized street due to military hard times. Throughout the war, the GULAG remained the "special reserve" of draft contingents, and it was mainly "criminals" and criminals who were sent to the front, to the Active Army (Article 58 seemed not to be trustworthy enough). But the last crumbs were swept out of these "bottlenecks" even earlier. The main source of draft contingents in the last year of the war was the territory of the western regions of the USSR liberated from German occupation.

There was someone to call on: 1.5 million people born in 1905-1918 who did not fall under the 1st military mobilization (they evaded the draft or the military registration and enlistment office itself disappeared before it had time to send out summonses); 3.6 million men born in 1890-1904, left and / or remaining in the occupied territory by the time the 2nd wave of mobilization was announced (August 41st). The exact number of teenagers who reached military age by 1944 is not known exactly. And at least 1-1.5 million more "encircled", deserters, "lagging behind their unit", etc. Theoretically, all these people should have existed and, after the arrival of the Red Army, arrived at the newly organized military enlistment office.

Almost everything was much more difficult - it was very difficult for a man of military age to survive three years of occupation. He raised too many questions from the German authorities: if a former soldier of the Red Army, then why not in a prison camp? if a partisan intelligence officer, then why hasn't he been arrested yet? Dodged the draft - or left by the NKVD to organize sabotage work? Loyalty to the "new order" had to be proved. Each proved in his own way. 511 thousand Soviet people worked on the railways - the same ones that Soviet partisans periodically blew up. Hundreds of thousands went to serve in the police battalions organized by the occupiers, Cossack regiments, "local self-defense" detachments, and all kinds of "national" armed formations. So, only as part of the infamous "Russian Liberation People's Army" (later the "liberation army" was transformed into the 29th SS division) of B. Kaminsky, more than 10 thousand people fought against the partisans in the Bryansk region.

And if those who fought on the side of the Nazis with weapons in their hands were still relatively few, then a much larger number of former Soviet citizens managed to "hurry up on the little things": someone quietly denounced a neighbor, someone helped the Germans find Jewish family hiding in the basement. Someone did not betray or inform anyone at all, on the contrary, at the risk to health and life, they robbed empty apartments, while engaging in a fierce battle with other marauders ...

Life under German occupation (if it could be called life) quickly made us forget "Katyusha", "Three Tankers", "If Tomorrow is War" and other wonderful Soviet songs. New concepts were much simpler: "man is a wolf to man", "you die today, and I - tomorrow". And now the Soviet people "taught dialectics not according to Hegel" - starting from the middle of 1943, a mass transition of "policemen" to the side of the partisans began. So massive that the 7,000th "Russian national SS brigade" under the command of Gil Rodionov turned into the "1st anti-fascist partisan

brigade", and by the summer of 1944 a quarter of all the partisans of Belarus were former "policemen" and "volunteers" of the Wehrmacht.

A great simplification of the real picture of events will be the idea that the remaining three-quarters were only engaged in derailing German trains. Some (we will not argue now about quantitative estimates) number of "partisan detachments" throughout the war was mainly engaged in "self-supply", i.e. ordinary robbery of local residents. Some activists even set up a regular collection of grain from the surrounding villages, distilled it for moonshine on an industrial scale and controlled the "sales markets" with an armed hand ...

After a more or less superficial check, the "authorities" handed over all this motley audience to the military registration and enlistment offices. Former "policemen", former deserters, former "partisans" and simply bandits, all equally cut bald, dressed in Red Army uniforms and went to the front. I don't know the exact numbers. I can't say with certainty whether among the Soviet soldiers who rampaged in Nemmersdorf and Striegau (as well as in hundreds of other cities and towns in Germany) there were "reforged" punishers from the 118th police battalion, who burned Khatyn along with the inhabitants. But the number of the battalion in this case is not so important.

Maybe former punishers, scammers, marauders, criminals made up 5% of the total draft contingent of the 44th year. Maybe 55%. Historians must eventually figure out these details, but for the purposes of this article they are of no fundamental importance. In any case, tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of morally degraded people, who have lost all moral guidelines, accustomed to sadistic violence, joined the Red Army.

Under certain conditions, this was already enough to commit those bloody atrocities, which were discussed above. It is not percentages that are important (social psychology long ago came to the conclusion that the norms of behavior of the human masses are determined by a minority of 5-10%), but just "certain conditions". One

situations, the bastards would try to behave "quieter than water, lower than the grass", in another - they began to actively impose their criminal "concepts" on the majority. And here we come, finally, to the main thing - to the one who set the tasks and established the conditions. To that main thing, without mentioning whom no serious discussion of the history of the war is possible. To Comrade Stalin.

Supreme Commander-in-Chief Generalissimo Stalin bears personal responsibility for war crimes committed on German soil, by virtue of the obvious and indisputable rule that a commander is responsible for the actions of his subordinates. I hope that all those who like to repeat: "Stalin won the war" will immediately agree with this statement. Well, if he alone won it, then he alone should be tried for war crimes that do not have a statute of limitations ...

There are, however, more serious reasons to assume that the mass brutal violence against the civilian population of Germany was organized with criminal intent by Stalin and his henchmen. What at first superficial glance seems to be an explosion of the "blind elements of vengeance" could be an operation planned in advance and carried out with cynical and selfish calculation. In order not to waste any more words, let us go straight to the transcript of the talks of the "Big Three" in Potsdam.

Fifth meeting, Saturday, July 21, 1945: **Stalin: "The American and British governments proposed several times that we should not allow Polish administration in the western regions until the question of Poland's western border is finally resolved. We could not follow these proposals, since the German population followed west along with the retreating non-German troops ... "**
Truman: "Determining the future borders is the task of the peace conference." Stalin:

"Very hard to recover. the German administration in this territory, all [the Germans] fled."

Truman: "I believe that in due time we will be able to reach an agreement on the future borders of Poland, but now I am interested in the question of these areas during the occupation."

Stalin: "These regions on paper belong to the territory of the German state, in fact they are Polish territories, since there is no longer a German population on them."

Truman: "Nine million Germans is a lot." Stalin: "They all fled." Churchill:

"... One more remark on the statement of Generalissimo Stalin that all Germans left these areas. There are other data that indicate that there still remain from two to two and a half million people. This situation needs to be studied." Stalin: "The war led to the fact that almost none of

these eight million Germans remained there ... When we arrived in that zone, which was considered as an addition to Polish territory, none of the Germans remained there. Such was the course of things ... " Churchill: "The immediate resettlement of eight

million people is a cause that I cannot support. A large-scale resettlement will be a shock to my country ... If the German population is not provided with sufficient food, then conditions similar to the German ones will reign in our own zone of occupation concentration camps, only on a larger scale." Stalin: "But you can buy grain from Poland." Churchill: "We do not consider this area to be

Polish territory." Stalin: "Poles live there, they sowed the fields. We cannot

demand from the Poles who sowed the fields to give the harvest to the Germans.

Truman: "One gets the impression of a fait accompli that a large part of Germany has been given to the Poles ... I believe that the Poles have no right to appropriate this part of Germany and wrest it from the German economy ..."

The next day, July 22, 1945, the deceived Western allies tried to go into diplomatic

"offensive". But Stalin firmly stood his ground:

Churchill: *"First, we agreed that the border would be established only with a peaceful settlement. Second, Poland would not benefit from the acceptance of such a large German territory. Third, the economic structure of Germany would be torn apart, and very large overload. Fourth. Along with the resettlement of large masses of the population, a very great moral responsibility will have to be taken on. I must say that I consider it wrong to resettle eight and a half to nine million people. Fifth, there are no exact numerical indicators on this point. According to our information, there are from eight to nine million people in this territory. The Soviet delegation claims that they are no longer there. This issue needs to be clarified ... "*

Stalin: *"On this territory there are neither eight, nor six, nor even three million Germans. Mass mobilization was carried out there, and many people died. Very few Germans remained there, and even those that remained fled from the Red Army ... "*

So what were the high contracting parties arguing about?

If there was one thing that Comrade Stalin could not be suspected of, it was love for Poland and the Poles. Rather, on the contrary, it was precisely to "Panish Poland" (this country was not called differently in Soviet newspapers) and everything connected with it that Stalin experienced a special, almost undisguised, hatred. Both in the secret Decrees of the Central Committee and in newspaper propaganda, the notorious "Polish agents" were invariably present as the primary source of all evil. It was the Polish communists in 37-78. a special fate awaited: Stalin did not limit himself to the execution of the entire leadership of the PKP in Moscow, but brought the matter to the official dissolution of the "wrecking" Polish Communist Party (which was an event completely uncommon even for the Comintern of the late 30s). In the summer of 1937, the infamous "Polish operation" began (order No. 00485, People's Commissar of the NKVD Yezhov), during which 143,810 people were arrested, of which 111,091 were sentenced to death. One hundred eleven

thousand. Every sixth Pole living in the USSR. A record figure even for the era of the Great Terror.

On the night of August 23-24, 1939, over a glass of champagne, Comrade Stalin agreed with Ribbentrop on the liquidation of Poland and the division of its territory, and on October 31, 1939, through the mouth of his faithful henchman V. Molotov, he called the Slavic state with a centuries-old history "the ugly brainchild of the Treaty of Versailles ". Voroshilov, People's Commissar of Defense, did not hide his triumph, who, in his holiday order of November 7, 1939, declared: **"The Polish state at the first serious military clash shattered like an old and rotten cart."** After that, a categorical ban was imposed on the very use of the term "Poland", and even in top secret, by no means intended for the public documents of the high command of the Red Army, the corresponding territory was called "former Poland" or (quite in the Hitlerian manner) "governor general".

Everything changed after the summer of 1941, when the regular Red Army **"blew up like an old and rotten cart at the first serious military clash,"** and Comrade Stalin - to his extreme amazement - found himself in the ranks of the "anti-Hitler coalition of democratic countries." The rules of conduct of the "club of democratic countries" required the observance of certain minimum standards of decency, and Stalin had to, at least in words, give up the "booty" that he had so cleverly acquired in alliance with Hitler. On July 30, 1941, an Agreement was signed with the "London" Polish government of Sikorsky, the first paragraph of which read: " **The government of the USSR recognizes the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 regarding territorial changes in Poland as invalid.**"

The long and complicated story of how Stalin, step by step, got rid of the consequences of the "momentary weakness", by virtue of which he agreed to recognize the "bourgeois émigré government" as legal, and his territorial acquisitions in Poland illegal, is far beyond the scope of this article. Let's move on right away

to the result: at the beginning of 1945, Stalin no longer wanted to hear about the "London government" of Poland; the Polish partisan Home Army was defeated, in fact, by the joint efforts of the Wehrmacht and the SS, the Red Army and the NKVD troops; in the convoy of the advancing Soviet troops, a puppet "Polish" government (the Polish Committee of National Liberation) was brought to Lublin. A pseudo-Polish army was even created ("Polish Army"), in which not only Soviet officers, but even ordinary soldiers (in particular, tank crews in full force) were enrolled in a "voluntary order". The state security organs of "People's Poland" were staffed from top to bottom with Soviet "advisers" and actually represented one of the territorial departments of the NKVD. The further appointment of Marshal of the Soviet Union Rokossovsky as Minister of Defense of puppet Poland was in this

context is quite symbolic and revealing.

In such a concrete historical situation, Stalin with good reason looked at the western border of "his" Poland as the frontier for the deployment of the armed forces of the USSR. And for this reason alone, he sought to move this frontier as far west as possible, as close as possible to Berlin and Dresden - there was still a lot of uncertainty in the post-war fate of Germany, while the Polish question of Stalin had already been successful by that time (in the interests of his expansion to Europe) and finally decided. As for the fate of East Prussia, here Stalin did not even see a question for discussion, and in Potsdam he briefly informed the "allies" that he was taking away the northern (Baltic) part of East Prussia with the cities of Königsberg and Tilsit (now Kaliningrad and Sovetsk) .

In general, the lands subject to annexation (East Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia) with a total area of 114 thousand square meters. km (which is equal to Belgium, Holland and Denmark combined) made up a quarter of the territory of Germany within the borders of 1937. However, declaring their claims to these territories (directly - as in the case of the northern part of East Prussia, or indirectly - through their inclusion in the puppet Polish state), Stalin also received a big problem - the multi-million German population. Hated

To Stalin, the "allies" could appeal to some incomprehensible "rights" of these Germans, remind them of the "Leninist principle of the right of nations to self-determination", and, ultimately, change their benevolent attitude towards the claims of the Kremlin extortionist. There was only one way to radically resolve this issue, and Stalin knew it very well: "No man - no problem."

By that time, Comrade Stalin also had rich experience in such matters; more than once or twice he moved the "wrong peoples" to the right places - but with the Germans the case was special. There were too many of them. Quantity was dialectically transformed into quality. It is one thing - in a calm peaceful environment to evict from the so-called. "Western Belarus and Ukraine" 400 thousand Poles for a year and a half, and it is quite another to move 8-9 million Germans from place to place, and even during the war, when every truck, every liter of gasoline, every wagon and steam locomotive on account! And where could Stalin deport the Germans of Silesia, Pomerania and Prussia? There were exactly two possible directions: either back, to the east, deep into Soviet territory, or forward, to the west, i.e. in the Soviet zone of occupation of Germany. In both cases, the Soviet Union would have to feed 8 million dependents (and in the sixth year of the World War the population of the German rear consisted for the most part of women, children, the disabled and the elderly).

The hypothesis, which I cannot support with any direct documentary evidence, is that **Stalin made the decision to expel the Germans**. Drive out quickly (faster than the Western "allies" have time to understand what is happening and somehow react), and at the same time put the process of expulsion on a solid basis of self-financing. Stalin decided to create in the territories to be annexed such an atmosphere of terror and horror that

the Germans themselves, on their own, in their cars, carts, bicycles, fishing boats sailed, rode, walked, ran, crawled west. West without stopping until they reach the British or American occupation zone.

It was a thrice "wise" decision: the deportation did not require a single ruble of expenses from the Soviet Union, in the course of creating the prescribed "environment" the Stalinist nomenklatura was able to fairly fill their pockets and dachas with loot, and the hated "allies" received (according to available, far from accurate estimates) 7 million hungry, sick, deprived of housing and property refugees.

I repeat once again - I have not seen any documents with Stalin's handwritten signature. Most likely, they never existed. Wise Stalin, unlike his Berlin competitor, tried not to leave evidence. Perhaps that is why Hitler's power lasted only 12 years, and Stalin, even half a century after his physical death, is loved by at least half of the population of Russia ...

Comrade Stalin, of course, did not give a written order to kill German women and children. Yes, there was no need for that. Two decades after Stalin came to power, seven years after the Great Terror, Stalin's entourage consisted of those who understood the will of the Master like a dog, without words. Those who did not understand quickly changed to others who were more understanding. And yet, the absence of a clear, written command explains much of what we know for sure about the tragic events on German soil. First of all, the extreme "heterogeneity" of the situation, fixed both by documents and by the people's memory. In one German town, inconceivable atrocities could be committed, in the neighboring one, relative order was maintained. Let us turn once again to the book of I. Hoffman: **"... Sometimes Soviet officers managed**

to successfully resist criminals in uniform - perhaps because they had similarly thinking bosses. So, even in the 91st Guards Rifle Division, the behavior was not uniform. At that while the divisional headquarters and the 275th rifle regiment committed terrible atrocities in and around Germau, no murders and rapes were reported from settlements such as Wilkau, which were captured by other parts of the division ...

While, for example, the 3rd battalion of the 14th rifle regiment of the 72nd rifle division committed serious crimes, the Red Army soldiers of the 3rd battalion of the 187th rifle regiment of the same division were warned against taking liberties with the population ...

Major General Gelen , to whose department all relevant messages flocked, in some cases also registered the "correct behavior" of Soviet officers and soldiers ... "

In parentheses, we note that a high degree of heterogeneity in the zeal of the performers was the norm rather than the exception for the mafia Stalinist system. Suffice it to recall, for example, the "kulak operation", which became one of the main components of the Great Terror of 37-38. In this case, there was a clear written directive (Order of the People's Commissar of the NKVD Yezhov No. 00447 of August 1, 1937), the categories of the population to be "withdrawn" were indicated; finally, firm quantitative "limits" were set, broken down into two categories (the first - execution, the second - arrest and camp). And what is the result? On the whole, the "limits" for shooting people across the country were exceeded by 3.5 times, but at the same time in some regions (10 territories and regions, judging by the monograph of L. Naumov), the "troikas" limited themselves to simply fulfilling the planned task, in others they overfulfilled him several times; the leaders (Karelia, the Far East, the Krasnoyarsk Territory, the Omsk Region) exceeded the initial "limits for the 1st category" by 14-15 times!

In the spring of 1945, in the absence of a clear written order (replaced, I assume, by verbal instructions), the heterogeneity of the situation must have been even greater. The farther away from the Kremlin and the closer to the front line, the greater was the number of middle-level commanders who did not understand (or perhaps did not want to understand) the "powerful will." Not everyone then lost their human appearance, and it was more difficult to intimidate a front-line commander than a Moscow official. Finally, any commander of a regiment or battalion clearly understood that he would be asked first of all for the performance of a combat mission, and to carry it out with tanks packed "to the eyeballs" with trophy junk, and drunken fighters,

dressed in Napoleonic hats and ladies' raincoats became difficult. For all these reasons, many commanders of the Red Army at all levels actively opposed the "running wild of the troops."

On the other hand, in order to carry out the instructions of Comrade Stalin to expel the Germans from the territories subject to annexation, widespread (in every place without exception) terror was not required. In order for the population to rush to flee in panic, abandoning their homes and property, a certain limited number of brutal massacres was enough. In other words, the number of outrages could be replaced with complete success for the task in hand by "quality", i.e. extreme degree of cruelty.

And here we come to "hypothesis number 2". It is even less provable by documents (in the conditions of the NKVD/NKGB archives that remain closed to this day), but at the same time it is quite plausible. Hypothesis No. 2 is that **special terrorist groups** ("special combat units" of the NKVD) were created to massacre the civilian population, and reports of children nailed to the table by tongues, women crucified in churches and other inexpressible abominations refer precisely to the consequences of their actions.

I will immediately emphasize that hypothesis No. 2 **does not exclude, but only supplements** the above assumption about the deliberate and sanctioned from the very "top" demoralization of the Red Army (as well as by no means hypothetical, but quite real and active participation of the OGPU in dispossession did not exclude, did not replace, but only supplemented and strengthened the atrocities of the crowd of village lumpen).

This hypothesis may seem absolutely incredible - but only within the framework of the ideas of the old Soviet (or vice versa - the latest Russian) school textbook. In the context of the real history of the USSR, the proposed hypothesis is quite ordinary. Lies, provocation and terror went hand in hand from the first days of the Bolshevik dictatorship: from the assassination attempt on Lenin, in which

half-blind (and immediately shot) F. Kaplan was accused; from the directives of Lenin himself, who urged to take advantage of the "opportune moment" when the corpses of those who died of starvation lie on the roads, and to hang under this pretext as many "counter-revolutionary priests" as possible; from the operation "Trust", in which the GPU organized a fake anti-Soviet organization as a "poisoned bait" ...

The existence of "special combat units" of the NKVD, which under the guise of UPA partisans terrorized the population of western Ukraine, has long ceased to be a hypothesis. Documents have been preserved, found and published that testify both to the scale of provocative activities (by June 1945, 156 special groups were created with a total number of 1783 people), and to the methods of their work, which exceeded even the measure of patience of the military prosecutor of the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian District, Colonel Kosharsky . On February 15, 1949, he sent to the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine N. Khrushchev

memorandum ***"on the facts of gross violation of the Soviet legality in the activities of the so-called special groups of the MGB"***.

It reported that ***"the grossly provocative and stupid work of a number of special groups and the arbitrariness and violence committed by their members against the local population not only do not facilitate the struggle, but, on the contrary, complicate it ... Without sufficient materials, the so-called MGB special groups operate blindly, as a result of which the victims of their arbitrariness are often people who are not involved in the Ukrainian gangster nationalist underground ... "***

Further page list of facts Kosharsky is on the prosecutor cites a multi-violence" ("... ***in March 1948, a special group led by the MGB agent "Winged", twice visited the house of Palamarchuk G.S., 62 years old, and, posing as UPA bandits, cruelly tortured him and his two daughters... On the night of July 23, 1948, a special group from the village of Podvysotskoye took N.Ya. Repnitskaya, born in 1931, into the forest. hung upside down,***

they injected a stick into the genitals, and then raped them one by one...") and concludes it with the following statement: ***"Such facts from the activities of the MGB special groups, unfortunately, are far from isolated."***

No, one should not think that the military prosecutor of the troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs has forgotten what "Soviet legality" is - at the end of his memorandum he writes without a shadow of a doubt: "All means are good in the fight against the Ukrainian-nationalist bandit underground. " The dissatisfaction of Colonel Kosharsky was caused by the fact that ***"acting as bandits of the UPA, the participants in the special combat operations of the MGB are engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation, they follow the line of an ^{creation} ^{anti-Soviet} artificial provocative nationalist underground."***

Who can guarantee that people treated in such a provocative way will not leave the control of the MGB and will not commit a terrorist act.

In fact, a conflict of departmental interests arose: the "chekists" were interested in the endless continuation of the armed struggle against the unarmed villagers (it was for these "feats" that they received orders, titles and a lot of money for "operational expenses"), while the prosecutor's office and the party leadership had to report to Moscow as soon as possible on the complete and final liquidation of the anti-Soviet underground in Ukraine. It was thanks to this conflict that "little rubbish was taken out of the hut", the memorandum of the prosecutor Kosharsky came to light and, most importantly for the historian, has been preserved in the party archives to this day.

Returning to the events of the spring of 1945, from the Carpathian forests to the ruins of German cities, it is worth noting that here the "organs" faced an incomparably easier task. If the "special combat units" acting under the guise of Bandera were theoretically required to conduct a complex intelligence and operational "game", if they had to be specially trained, prepared, staffed with people who knew Western Ukrainian speech, local orders and customs, then in Germany everything was much easier. All it took was

just "shug the Fritz". To do this, it was necessary to find several thousand people in the multimillion-strong army, stained with past cooperation with the Nazi occupiers, threaten them with exposure and execution, and then offer "to atone for their guilt with blood." And not with his own, but with the blood of civilians in Germany. In the fourth year of the war, there were a lot of scum with a corresponding biography, and they accumulated rich "experience" of brutal reprisals against women and children.

It is a sin to talk about this, but one cannot deny the fact that the "threshold of sensitivity" of the Germans was completely different. Not ours. They did not have a real "Bolshevik hardening". Germany in the 20th century did not survive a multi-year civil war, accompanied by an endless series of pogroms and executions, or dispossession, or famine; and the 37th year in the memory of the German man in the street remained the year of economic prosperity, and not the "black crows" and the nightly disappearance of neighbors, friends and acquaintances. This layman was not ready for the arrival of real mass terror, and therefore Stalin's calculation was fully justified: after the first meeting with thugs in the form of Red Army soldiers, the civilian population of the eastern regions of Germany turned into a stampede.

The question of the geographic and temporal limits of the terror sanctioned from above against the civilian population of Germany deserves serious study. There is reason to assume (I repeat once again that at the moment I have only a question, but there is no exhaustive answer to it) that with the withdrawal of the advancing Red Army from the annexed territories of Silesia and Pomerania to the territory of the future GDR, outrages sharply subsided. At least, in J. Hoffmann's book, all episodes of massacres take place in Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia, i.e. in territories subject to annexation. In Berlin (in front of the officers of the Western allies and foreign correspondents), the "thirst for revenge" was limited to nothing more than looting and rape.

It is worth noting the fact that on April 14, 1945, i.e. two days before the start of the Berlin operation (the offensive of the Red Army from the coast

Oder to Berlin) the famous article "Comrade Ehrenburg simplifies" appeared in the newspaper Pravda, published signed by the head of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks G. Alexandrov. The style and language of the article (with characteristic Stalinist repetitions, questions and answers) allows us to assume with a high degree of probability that Comrade Stalin at least dictated to Aleksandrov the main theses of the article (if only he did not write it himself).

And if it is still possible to argue about the authorship of the directive (and this was the only way in the Stalinist USSR that an article published in the central printed organ of the Central Committee of the Party) could be argued, then under the Directive of the Supreme Command No. The Stavka directive was addressed **to "commanders of the troops and members of the Military Councils of the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts"**, but not to the command of the 3rd and 2nd Belorussian Fronts, fighting in East Prussia and Pomerania!

The operative part of Directive No. 11072 reads: **The**

Headquarters of the Supreme High Command orders: 1.

Demand a change in attitude (underlined by me - M.S.) towards the Germans, both prisoners of war and civilians. It's better to deal with the Germans. The brutal treatment of the Germans makes them afraid and makes them resist stubbornly, not surrendering. The civilian population, fearing revenge, organizes itself into gangs. Such a situation is unfavorable for us. A more humane attitude towards the Germans will make it easier for us to conduct military operations on their territory and, undoubtedly, will reduce the stubbornness of the Germans in de

2. In the regions of Germany to the west of the line, the mouth of the Oder River, Furstenberg, then the Neisse River (to the west), to create German administrations, and to put burgomasters - Germans in the cities.

The rank and file members of the National Socialist Party, if they are loyal to the Red Army, should not be touched, but only the leaders should be detained if they did not have

time to escape. 3. Improving attitudes towards the Germans should not lead to a decrease in vigilance and familiarity with the Germans.

***Headquarters of the Supreme High
Command
I. Stalin Antonov"***

It is noteworthy that this Directive was declassified and published (collection of documents "Russian Archive. Great Patriotic War. Battle for Berlin", vol. 15, M., "Terra", 1995) without stating (i.e. describing the actual situation) parts. The line indicated in paragraph 2 exactly corresponds to the border of the Soviet zone of occupation of Germany, i.e. future GDR. It can be assumed that Stalin did not need an occupied "socialist Germany" without a population, and he ordered ***"to change the attitude towards the Germans"***, i.e. stop forced exile.

And only in one single aspect, the brilliant complex Comrade Stalin's plan was not carried out:

"Stalin's intentions were to, with the merciless expulsion of Germans from the eastern territories approved by him, to bring the Germans in the western occupation zones to despair, to discredit the Western powers in such a way as to eventually turn people to Bolshevism ... The children of the people grew up in poverty and looked to the future, where they can't get out of it.

The revolutionary situation was evident. But the revolution did not happen. The political calculation of the East took into account almost all factors, except for one - people. Millions of Germans fled from the Red Army. Millions have witnessed what happened during the arrival of Soviet troops. Millions experienced and suffered from communist domination. Humiliated and insulted, they were lost to communism, under whatever mask and with whatever arguments it might come out..."

With these words of the German historian and journalist Günter Beddecker, I cannot finish my article, because the Russian

the historian has no right not to speak about the most numerous victims of this forgotten crime of Stalin. About the soldiers of the Red Army

At the end of 1944, Germany, its industry, transport system, and armed forces were in a state of death throes. Hitler's "thousand-year Reich" lost all allies, lost all external sources of raw materials (in particular, Romanian oil, Swedish iron ore, Finnish and Ukrainian nickel). Anglo-American aviation, which had seized complete air supremacy over any point in Germany, methodically destroyed city after city, factory after factory. In one raid, several kilotons of bombs were dropped on one object. The German army no longer had a safe rear.

After the transport system and chemical industry enterprises (production of synthetic gasoline, nitrogen, explosives) became the main object of air strikes from May 1944, German military production collapsed. Factories hidden underground and dispersed throughout the remnants of the territory could still produce tanks and aircraft, but all this equipment turned into piles of useless scrap metal, even before they had time to leave the assembly line - their fuel tanks were empty.

But even the loss of fuel reserves, territory, transport routes, experienced pilots and tankers could not be compared with the loss of the main thing - meaning and purpose. What, besides increasing the number of victims, could Germany bring the continuation of hostilities?

In September 1944, the Red Army reached the line of the river. Vistula, and the armies of the Western allies were rapidly advancing towards the Rhine. The outcome of the war was no longer in the slightest doubt. Before the Tehran Conference, the Hitlerite leadership could still hope for a "political solution", i.e. to a split in the camp of opponents of Germany

and a separate peace with one of them; Until July 1944, one could hope that the Anglo-American troops that landed in Normandy could be surrounded and destroyed. The bomb explosion, which sounded on July 20, 1944 at Hitler's Headquarters, informed the whole world that the top command staff of the Wehrmacht had parted with the last illusions. And this applied not only to the generals-conspirators. Chief of Staff of the High Command of the German Armed Forces, Colonel-General A. Jodl during interrogation on July 17, 1945

gave the following testimony:

"About February 1944, I reported to the Fuhrer that if the British and Americans landed in France, and we fail to throw them into the sea, we will lose the war. I made this statement in writing ... Hitler recognized my point of view as correct, but forbade circulate this memorandum to the commanders of the air force, army and navy."

Taken at the turn of 44-45. the last two, desperate attempts of the Wehrmacht to go on the counteroffensive (in the Ardennes - against the Western allies, in the area of the Hungarian Lake Balaton - against the Red Army) ended in a crushing defeat, the loss of the last combat-ready tank and aviation units. The collapse of the German war machine became quite obvious.

And suddenly, on the Eastern Front, dramatic changes are taking place. The German troops seemed to have gained a "second wind" - which immediately affected both the pace of advance and the level of losses of the Red Army.

Let us turn to a completely official and reputable source - the statistical collection "Secret Classification Removed", published in 1993 under the editorship of Colonel General G.F. Krivosheev. On pp. 157-159 are given the figures of the irretrievable average daily losses of the Red Army by periods and campaigns of the war. These figures are terrible - every day of the war claimed thousands of lives of Soviet soldiers. Let us digress, however, from quite understandable emotions and finally pay attention to the dynamics of these figures:

1. summer-autumn campaign of 1943 (July 1 - 12/31/43, the Kursk Bulge, the liberation of the left-bank Ukraine, Kyiv and Smolensk); irretrievable losses - **7.6 thousand** people per day
2. winter-spring campaign of 1944 (January 1 - May 31, 1944, liberation of the right-bank Ukraine and Crimea, Leningrad and Novgorod regions); irretrievable losses - **5.3 thousand** people per day
3. summer-autumn campaign of 1944 (June 1 - 12/31/44, the largest offensive operations of the Red Army: Belorussian, Lvov-Sandomierz, Iasi-Kishinev, Baltic, Belgrade); irretrievable losses - **4.5 thousand** people a day

The skill of the fighters and commanders of the Red Army is growing, its numerical and fire superiority over the enemy is constantly increasing, the material and moral resources of the Wehrmacht are dwindling. As a result, an increasingly large-scale offensive by the Soviet troops on all fronts with a steadily declining level of average daily losses.

The year 1945 is coming. The numerical superiority of the Red Army in tanks and aviation is already expressed in double digits, the German command throws untrained boys from the "Volkssturm" to the front - and at the same time, the level of casualties of the Red Army not only does not decrease, but noticeably increases ! **6.2 thousand** people. This is the level of average daily losses of the 45th year. Finishing off the agonizing Wehrmacht, the Red Army suffers losses one-third greater than in 1944.

Now let's look at the figures for the loss of inanimate technology (pp. 355-356). In 1943, the Red Army loses an average of 64 tanks and self-propelled guns per day, in 1944 - 65 per day. As you can see, during the two years of the war, the average daily losses of tanks and self-propelled guns remain almost constant. The year 1945 is coming. From January 1 to May 10, 1945, 13,700 tanks and self-propelled guns were lost. 105 (one hundred and five) per day. Average daily losses almost **doubled**.

What happened to the Soviet armored vehicles? Has she become worse than in 43-44 years? Yes, nothing like that, it was by 1945 that the rearmament to a new, much more powerful

modifications of the "thirty-four" (T-34/85); in large numbers, the troops began to receive the latest heavy tanks of the IS series and heavy self-propelled guns armed with monstrous 122-mm and 152-mm guns (not to be confused with the short-barreled 152-mm howitzer on the pre-war KV-2), capable of penetrating the frontal armor of any German tank, up to and including the King's Tiger. Statistics show that if, as of January 1, 1944, there were 1.6 thousand heavy tanks and 0.8 thousand heavy self-propelled guns in the Red Army, then by May 9, 1945 there were already 5.3 thousand of them, respectively. and 2.7 thousand units.

On the other hand, the Germans did not have any anti-tank "wonder weapons" in 1945. Rumors about a revolution in weapons technology made by the "faustpatron" are greatly exaggerated. Turning to the work of Colonel P. Igumnov compiled in the hot pursuit of the war ("Study of the defeat of domestic tanks", 1947), we find the following figures for the distribution of tank losses in the last months of the war: - 1st Belorussian Front, January-March 1945 ;

from faustpatrons - 5.5% - 1st Ukrainian Front, January-March

1945; from faustpatrons - 8.9% - 4th Ukrainian Front, January-May

1945; from faustpatrons - 9% - 1- th Belorussian Front, April-May 1945;

from faustpatrons - 10.5% As you can see, the main means of

destroying tanks was and remains cannon artillery, which accounts for more than 90% of all losses. Even in the Berlin operation (i.e., in the conditions of fierce street fighting in a huge city), the losses of tanks of the 2nd Guards Tank Army were distributed as follows: from cannon artillery fire - 77%, from faustpatrons - 23%.

As for the artillery, there was nothing new in service with the Wehrmacht in 1945. The same 75mm and 88mm barrels. If there were changes, then only for the worse for the Germans: the shortage of tungsten forced by the end of 44 to completely curtail the production of sub-caliber armor-piercing shells; the shortage of gasoline sharply reduced the number of combat-ready tanks and

self-propelled guns; thus, the most massive means of fighting Soviet tanks again - as at the beginning of the war - was a towed anti-tank gun, the calculation of which was protected from bullets and fragments only by a tunic and overcoat. And with all this - a twofold increase in the number of losses of Soviet tanks!

The most paradoxical, in my opinion, events took place not on the ground, but in the air. After the failure of the counter-offensive in the Ardennes, German aviation practically "ended". Gasoline and pilots were only enough for a few hundred aircraft, and those that still remained in service were involved in the Reich air defense system. In the spring of 1945, a German fighter could be seen in the sky over the Eastern Front only in very rare cases. And at the same time, the average daily losses of Soviet aircraft in the category "shot down in air combat" almost did not decrease: 7.95 aircraft in 1944 and 7.49 in 1945 (hereinafter, data from the collection "Soviet Aviation in the Great Patriotic War" are given war of 1941-1945 in numbers"; compiled with the heading "Soviet secret" by the Main Headquarters of the USSR Air Force in 1962) If you look at the statistics of losses even more closely, it turns out that the total

losses in air battles of bombers and attack aircraft even increased (3.3 per day in 1944 and 4.3 in 1945). The losses of bombers and attack aircraft in the category "from anti-aircraft fire" **increased by 1.7 times** (5.8 per day in 1944 and 10.0 in 1945).

So what happened on the Eastern Front in the spring of 1945? How to explain such an increase in the losses of the Red Army?

The traditional Soviet historiography tried not to notice these facts, not to ask the inevitable questions. But on occasion, words could be heard about "fanatic SS men ready to defend Hitler to the last", about the "innate discipline" of a German soldier who cannot stop shooting without an order ... It is not necessary to deny the existence of these factors. But they should not close our attention to the main thing - the "miracle weapon" that Stalin handed over to the German soldier. Yes, that's right: Goebbels

he only shouted about the mysterious "wunderwaffe" that would turn the tide of the war, but he deceived. But Comrade Stalin did not disappoint, he gave the Wehrmacht the most important thing - the goal.

After Nemmersdorf (and hundreds of other similar "Dorffs"), the German soldier on the Eastern Front did not have to explain what he was fighting for. The goal was obvious (it could be seen with the naked eye) and - most importantly - quite achievable. The soldier saw endless columns of refugees going west, the boundless sea of people at the mooring walls of the Baltic ports, saw ships leaving one after another with thousands of refugees to the shores of Denmark and western Germany. Every day and even every hour of the delay in the offensive of the Red Army increased the number of German women, old people and children saved from violence and death. From that moment on, the Wehrmacht regained the meaning and purpose of continuing the struggle.

At the end of January 1945, the troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front crossed the Oder near the city of Breslau (now Wroclaw, Poland). On February 15, the encirclement closed around Breslau. The garrison of the city, which, taking into account the Volkssturm, numbered no more than 50 thousand people, defended the whole of February. Then all of March. All April. 13 Soviet divisions were involved in the battles for Breslau. Far to the west, Berlin fell, the bloody tyrant Hitler committed suicide, and fierce fighting continued among the charred ruins of Breslau. The city capitulated only on May 6, 1945. The military commandant of Breslau, General Niehoff, survived the war, survived 10 years spent in Soviet camps. In his memoirs, he claims that the long defense of the city allowed 1.5 million German refugees from Silesia to go west.

On March 5, 1945, troops of the 1st Belorussian Front launched an assault on the small coastal town of Kolberg in Pomerania. At that moment, 85 thousand civilians (residents and refugees) accumulated in the city. Kolberg's garrison numbered 3,000 soldiers. This handful of people held back the onslaught of the 1st Guards Tank Army and three divisions of the Polish Army until the morning of March 18. Nothing remained of the city but ruins; the garrison lost 2,300 soldiers

killed. Ships of the German Navy took 70,000 refugees out of Kolberg.

On January 13, 1945, the troops of the 2nd and 3rd Belorussian Fronts (117 rifle divisions, 7 tank corps, 9 separate tank brigades, 1,590 thousand personnel) launched an offensive against East Prussia. In the last days of January, the Königsberg grouping of German troops was surrounded from the west and northeast and pressed to the sea. Further progress was stopped by fierce resistance from the Wehrmacht units, which were outnumbered by the advancing enemy by at least 6-7 times. On February 19-20, the Germans launched a counteroffensive, broke through the encirclement ring in the west and restored the land connection of East Prussia with the still unoccupied regions of eastern Germany. The German troops held this "road of life" throughout March, until a new offensive of the Red Army began in early April. Königsberg was taken after fierce fighting only on April 12, 1945. But even after that, the Germans continued to hold the last point of East Prussia for two weeks - the port of Pillau (now Baltiysk), from the berths of which ships with refugees and the wounded continued to depart until April 27.

After the loss of the port of Pillau, the Hel Spit (north of Danzig in Pomerania) remained the only "harbor of hope". The East Pomeranian offensive operation of the Red Army began on February 10, 1945. The defense of Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland) continued until March 30. The Germans held the tiny strip of the Hel Spit, shot through by artillery, until May 8! During this time, 400 thousand people were taken by sea. In total, 2 million people were evacuated from the ports of East Prussia and Pomerania to the West by civilian ships and ships of the Navy - that was the largest "sea landing operation" in history.

In the mass consciousness, the "spring of victory" is associated with the attack on Berlin. It is this operation that seems to the inexperienced "man from the street" the main (if not the only) event of the last months of the war. Alas, this is a regrettable delusion.

In the Berlin operation (and this is not only the assault on the city itself, but also all the military operations on the offensive from the Oder to the Spree and the encirclement of the Berlin Wehrmacht group) from April 16 to May 8, 1945, 78 thousand Soviet soldiers and officers died. And during the East Prussian operations, 126 thousand soldiers and officers of the Red Army died. And another 53,000 were killed during the closely related East Pomeranian operation. The total irretrievable losses of the four fronts that "liberated Germany" (3rd Belorussian, 2nd Belorussian, 1st Belorussian, 1st Ukrainian) in 1945 amounted to 411 thousand people. In total, on all fronts, the Red Army, aviation and navy irretrievably lost from January 1 to May 10, 1945 801 thousand people. Eight hundred thousand dead. The Berlin operation occupies less than one tenth (!) Of this horrifying figure.

Grand Admiral K. Dönitz, appointed by Hitler to the post of "Reich President", was not a "SS fanatic". He was never even a member of the Nazi NSDAP. And by the time Dönitz assumed power and responsibility for the remnants of Germany, Hitler himself was no longer alive. However, the war on the Eastern Front ended. Speaking at 10:00 pm on May 1, 1945, on German radio, Dönitz declared: ***"My first task is to save Germany from***

destruction by the Bolsheviks. For the sake of this goal alone, the armed struggle will continue. As long as the achievement of this goal is hindered by the British and Americans, we will be forced to continue defensive battles against them too..."

The bloodshed didn't stop. German troops in the East continued to fight. Guns rumbled at Potsdam, Breslau, Danzig. Surrounded back in November 1944 in Courland (the coastal strip of modern Lithuania), the Wehrmacht group resisted until May 10 (tenth), 1945. At the same time, the losses of the 1st and 2nd Baltic fronts in 1945 amounted to only 62 thousand people killed. A strange story with the "popular uprising" in Prague (the patience of the people, who put up with the German occupation for six years, burst, for some reason, at the moment when

American troops were stationed 80 km from Prague) and the march of the Red Army to help the rebels increased the loss of the Red Army by another 11 thousand killed. Only the merciless position of the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in Western Europe, General of the US Army D. Eisenhower (***"I ordered to tell Jodl that if they do not immediately stop putting forward all sorts of pretexts and dragging out time, then I will close the entire Allied front so as not to let any German refugees through our front line"*** - emphasized by me, M.S.) forced Dönitz to stop hostilities on all fronts ...

In the statistical collection of Krivosheev, the corresponding chapter is called "The price of the liberation mission." Maybe in the 21st century it is time to think about the adequacy of such names? The Anglo-American allies liberated Italy, Greece, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, almost all of Austria, part of the Czech Republic, more than half of the territory of Germany (more than half within the borders of 37, four-fifths within the modern borders). In 1938, the population of these territories was over 170 million people. At the same time, the human losses of the Allied armies turned out to be an order of magnitude less than the losses of the Red Army (in 1945, the Americans lost about 55 thousand people in the European theater of operations, the Anglo-Canadian troops another 15 thousand).

Yes, of course, three-quarters of the German army was on the Eastern Front; yes, of course, in April 45 on the Western Front, German soldiers surrendered in droves. Nobody argues with this - the question is different: WHY tens of thousands of Wehrmacht soldiers surrendered in the West and fought to the last bullet and the last drop of blood in the East? Is this striking difference connected with "the class solidarity of the world bourgeoisie, its mortal hatred of the workers' and peasants' state"? Or were there other, much more earthly and significant reasons? 800 thousand dead - is this the "price of the liberation mission"? Or a payment for Stalin's sophisticated geopolitical games?

Statistics, necessary and inevitable in any military historical study, turns, alas, the immense suffering of millions of people into neat columns of numbers. This is not good, so I want to end the article with a naive account of the experience of one Hungarian woman, Alain Poltz. Who is Alain Poltz? A kind person. A very kind person (she found a job for herself as a psychotherapist in a hospice). Before reading her memoirs "Woman and War" (published in the magazine "Neva", No. 2/2004), I thought that only disembodied angels could possess such kindness and humility. Unfortunately, this quite earthly woman of 19 years old found herself at the end of the war in a small Hungarian town, which became a frontline zone for several months.

Alain Poltz talks about what she saw and experienced with amazing meekness and sympathy for all people. Even what in the mouth of a modern journalist would seem to me a disgusting game of "political correctness", she sounds natural and humane. Of course, she does not forget to constantly remind the reader that **"Hungarian soldiers did not behave much more decently in Russian villages."**

She manages to come up with explanations and justifications for everything ("I **found out that they accuse us of being spies, because exactly after the clock on the bell tower a bomb hit the Russian headquarters and many people died. They thought that we they gave signals from the church. It was impossible for them to explain that the tower clock strikes regularly, because it is wound up, this is a mere coincidence. In general, a lot of things could not be explained to the Russians. They lived in a different world, they had a completely different experience. Their logic was also different. They didn't know what a clock**

She even finds an excuse for this: **"By dawn, I understood how a fracture of the spine occurs. They do this: they put the woman on her back, throw her legs to her shoulders, and the man enters from above, kneeling. If you lean too hard, the woman's spine will crack. It turns out this is not on purpose:**

just in the heat of violence, no one restrains himself. The spine, twisted by a snail, is squeezed all the time, swayed at one point and they do not notice when it breaks ... "

And ends the story of another violence with a very commendable for the Soviet government with a remark:

"Meanwhile, the Russian officer lit a match, first touched my eyes with his finger - whether they were open. Convinced of this, he got down to business. It hurt a little. But since I still didn't move, didn't scream, he lit another match - to see if I was alive I shook my head. I must not have given him much satisfaction. But when I started to get ready to take the mattress away, he sent his orderly to the cellar, who also used me. Then I did not think why he sent the orderly. Now it seems to me that they are more democratic than our officers ... "

And immediately refuses revenge at the moment when she has there is a real opportunity for revenge:

"A line of soldiers was lined up in front of me, and I had to point to the one who raped me. I remember only vaguely: on a frosty winter morning I pass in front of the formation, the soldiers stand stretched out, exactly, at attention. Two officers accompany me on the left. "I walk along the line, they keep a little behind. In the eyes of one of the soldiers I saw fear. He had blue eyes, the boy was very young. From this fear, I guessed: it was him. But it was so strong, so terrible that flashed in his eyes, which I immediately felt: it is impossible. There is no point in killing this boy. Why, if others go unpunished? Yes, and this one, the only one of all, why "?

As it should be in the life of kind people, the end of the story is quite happy: Alain Poltz remained alive, retained her mind, was able to get to Budapest, found her mother alive ... And even the house where her parents lived was destroyed by bombing from the other side, and in the apartment left traces of pre-war prosperity and a lot of food. Why not a Christmas story?

"Of course, my mother cried, and was happy, and hugged me. And I also looked at her and rejoiced at her. I was glad that they were alive, but not too happy. I didn't believe much. I already carried a disease in me - gonorrhea, because of which I couldn't give birth later, and didn't know yet whether I had syphilis or not. I had a suspicion that I was very contagious, and I would infect anyone did not want.

We were sitting at the table. Served tongue with tomato sauce. I looked at him in amazement and ate quietly, silently. Talked about that Russians rape women.

"You too?" Mom asked. "Yes," I said, "we have too." "But you weren't touched?" Mom asked. "No one was spared," I said and continued to eat. Mom looked at me and said in surprise: "But why are you allowed?"

"Because they beat me," I said, and continued to eat. I did not see anything important or interesting in this matter.

Then someone asked casually and jokingly: "Were there many of them?" I said and continued to eat.

After dinner, my mother took me aside and said: "Daughter, don't joke so rudely, they will still believe!" I looked at her: "Mommy, it's true!" Mom burst into tears, then threw herself on my neck, begging: "Daughter, tell me that this is not true ..."

Should I quote further? Of course, Alain Poltz felt sorry for her poor mother and told her the words that she wanted to hear. Alas, I cannot and do not want to console our "zero patriots" (Russian chauvinists of the era of expensive oil of the zero years of the 21st century) in this way. Everything written above is true. The terrible, disgusting truth.

And the gentlemen of the patriots have to decide - who are they? Masters or slaves? The slave does not know the sense of responsibility. Those who have renounced freedom and personal dignity are not responsible for their actions. But he

can continue to enjoy the crimson ringing of the words of the chief of the gendarme corps, Count Benckendorff: ***“Russia’s past is amazing, its present is more than magnificent, as for its future, it is higher than anything that the wildest imagination can draw. It is from this point of view that Russian history should be considered and written.*”**

Free people, however, cannot agree either with the gendarmes' version of Russian history, or with the gendarmes' monopoly right to dispose of Russia's present and future. Free people should not be afraid of their history. They must muster the courage to admit the obvious. And share with your country the responsibility for
All.

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